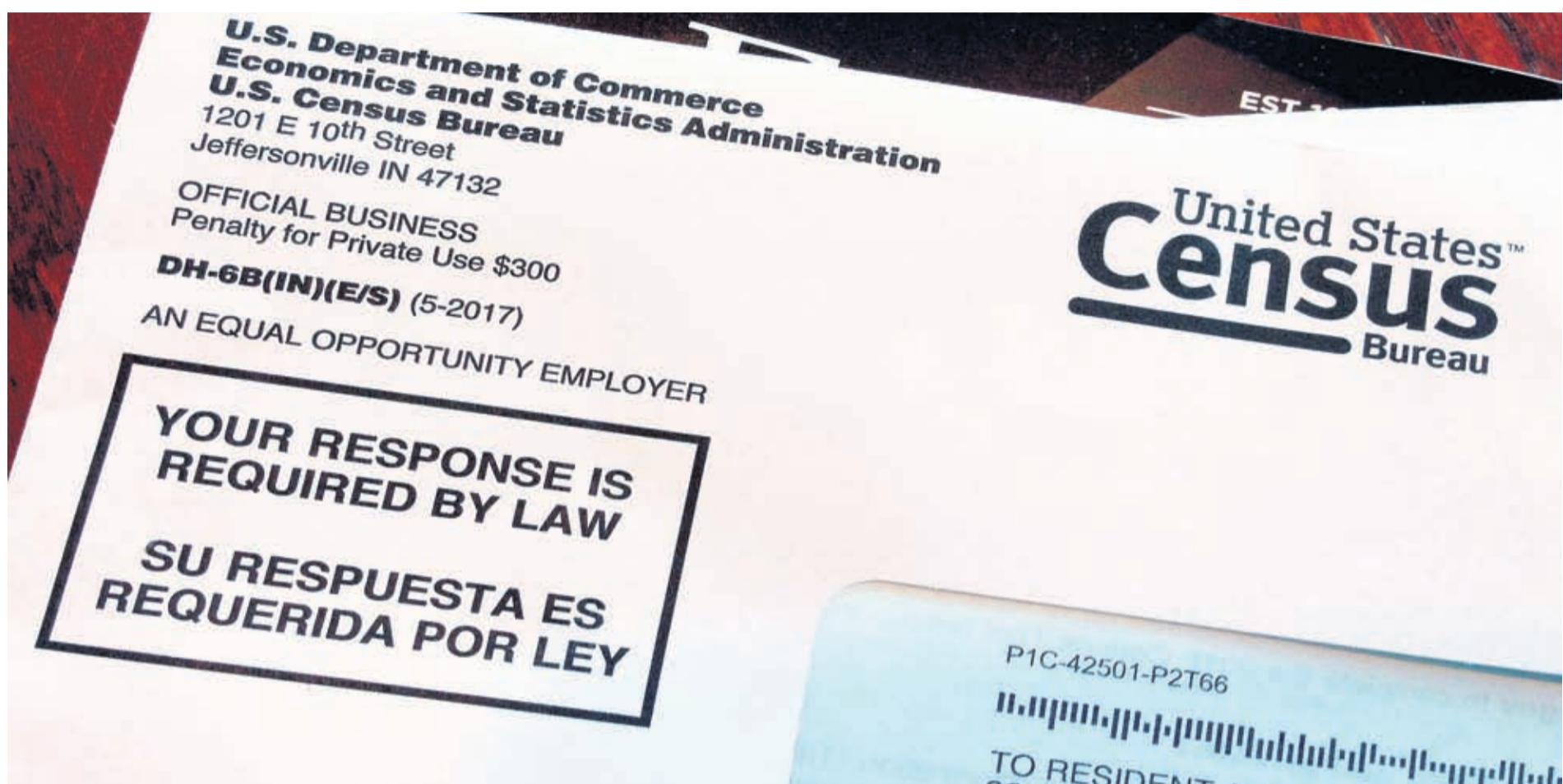




The Archeology
of Aruba

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This March 23, 2018, file photo shows an envelope containing a 2018 census letter mailed to a U.S. resident as part of the nation's only test run of the 2020 Census.
Associated Press

Trump abandons bid to include citizenship question on census

By J. COLVIN, M. SHERMAN and Z. MILLER

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump abandoned his controversial bid to inject a citizenship question into next year's census Thursday, instead directing federal agencies to try to compile the information using existing databases.

He insisted he was "not backing down," declaring in a Rose Garden announcement that the goal was simple and reasonable: "a clear breakdown of the number of citizens and non-citizens that make up the United States population." But the decision was clearly a reversal, after the Supreme Court blocked his effort by

disputing his administration's rationale for demanding that census respondents declare whether or not they were citizens. Trump had said last week that he was "very seriously" considering an executive order to try to force the question.

Continued on Page 2

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Trump abandons bid to include citizenship question on census

Continued from Front

But the government has already begun the lengthy and expensive process of printing the census questionnaire without it, and such a move would surely have drawn an immediate legal challenge.

Instead, Trump said Thursday that he would be signing an executive order directing every federal department and agency to provide the Commerce Department with all records pertaining to the number of citizens and noncitizens in the country.

Trump's efforts to add the question on the decennial census had drawn fury and backlash from critics who complained that it was political, meant to discourage participation, not only by people living in the country illegally but also by citizens who fear that participating would expose noncitizen family members to repercussions.

Dale Ho, director of the American Civil Liberties Union's Voting Rights Project, and the lawyer who argued the Supreme Court



President Donald Trump, joined by Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross, and Attorney General William Barr, participate in an event about the census and the citizenship question in the Rose Garden at the White House in Washington, Thursday, July 11, 2019.

Associated Press

case, celebrated Thursday's announcement by the president, saying: "Trump's attempt to weaponize the census ends not with a bang but a whimper."

Trump said his order would apply to every agency, including the Department of Homeland Security and the

Social Security Administration.

The Census Bureau already has access to Social Security, food stamp and federal prison records, all of which contain citizenship information.

Trump, citing Census Bureau projections, predicted that using previously available records, the administration could determine the citizenship of 90 percent of the population "or more." "Ultimately this will allow us to have a more complete count of citizens than through asking the single question alone," he contended.

But it is still unclear what Trump intends to do with the citizenship information. Federal law prohibits the use of census information to identify individuals, though that restriction has been breached in the past. At one point, Trump suggested it could help states that "may want to draw state and local legislative districts based upon the voter-eligible population." That would mark a change from how districts are drawn currently, based on the entire population, and could increase Republican political power.

Civil rights groups said the president's efforts had already sown fear and discord in vulnerable com-

munities, making the task of an accurate count even harder.

"The damage has already been done," said Lizette Escobedo of the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials Educational Fund.

The Census Bureau had stressed repeatedly that it could produce better citizenship data without adding the question.

In fact, the bureau had recommended combining information from the annual American Community Survey with records held by other federal agencies that already include citizenship records.

"This would result in higher quality data produced at lower cost," deputy Census Bureau Director Ron Jarmin had written in a December 2017 email to a Justice Department official.

But Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross, who oversees the Census Bureau, ultimately rejected that approach and ordered the citizenship question be added to the census.

The American Community Survey, which polls 3.5 million U.S. households every year, already includes questions about respondents' citizenship.

"It's a retreat back to what he should have done from the beginning," said Ken-

neth Prewitt, a former Census Bureau director.

Trump's administration had faced numerous roadblocks to adding the question, beginning with the ruling by the Supreme Court temporarily barring its inclusion on the grounds that the government's justification was insufficient. Two federal judges also rejected the Justice Department's plan to replace the legal team fighting for inclusion.

But Trump insisted his administration was pushing forward anyway, publicly contradicting government lawyers and his commerce secretary, who had previously conceded the case was closed, as well as the Census Bureau, which had started the process of printing the 2020 questionnaire without the controversial query after the Supreme Court decision.

As he has many times before, Trump exploded the situation with a tweet, calling reports that the fight was over "FAKE!"

A week of speculation about the administration's plans and renewed court battles ensued as Trump threw out ideas, including suggesting last week that officials might be able to add an addendum to the questionnaire with the question after it was printed. And he toyed with the idea of halting the constitutionally mandated survey entirely while the court battle played out.

Attorney General William Barr, however, said that the government had no interest in delaying the count and that, while he was confident the census question would have eventually survived legal review, the process would have taken too long to work its way through the courts.

Trump had offered multiple explanations for why he believed the question was necessary to include in the once-a-decade population count that determines the allocation of seats in the House of Representatives for the next 10 years and the distribution of some \$675 billion in federal spending. □

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U.S. growing largest crop of marijuana for research in 5 years

By CARLA K. JOHNSON
AP Medical Writer

The U.S. government is growing the largest crop of research marijuana in five years, responding to interest in varieties with high levels of THC and CBD.

The government is the only source of pot for nearly all research in the U.S., while it still considers it illegal and dangerous.

Scientists have asked for weed that more closely matches what's sold in states that have legalized medical or recreational marijuana, the National Institute on Drug Abuse said in an email Thursday to The Associated Press.

The federal agency said it plans to grow 2,000 kilograms (4,409 pounds) this year at the University of Mississippi, which holds the sole federal contract for producing marijuana. That's enough for 5 million joints, although the government provides the marijuana in



This 2014 photo provided by the University of Mississippi shows marijuana plants growing at the Ole Miss medicinal gardens in University, Miss.

different forms.

The crop will be divided between high THC and high CBD varieties with "recent interest (in CBD) as a potential medicine for a number of medical conditions," NIDA said. The compound THC causes pot's mind-altering effect; CBD doesn't get people high.

Last year, a CBD-based drug was approved by

federal regulators for two rare seizure disorders and researchers are pursuing research on it for other conditions. Others are focused on THC.

"We want to study what our patients are using," said University of Colorado Assistant Professor Emily Lindley, who is investigating marijuana with high THC as an alternative to opioids for

in Arizona asked the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia to order the DEA to process the applications.

"We are still working through the process and those applications remain under review," said DEA spokeswoman Katherine Pfaff in an email Thursday. She declined to comment on the litigation.

In response to questions from the AP, NIDA said there had been no major increase in demand for cannabis by researchers in recent years. Last year, 20 researchers got shipments of government marijuana, much of it from frozen cannabis grown in 2014. Since 2010, the number of researchers receiving government marijuana has ranged from eight to 21. Researchers should be able to obtain material from the new crop in the fall after harvest and analyses are completed, NIDA said. □

Associated Press

Race becomes new flashpoint with Pelosi, Ocasio-Cortez

By LISA MASCARO
AP Congressional Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — The debate between Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and other House Democrats over migrant children in detention at the border was wrenching enough. Then it became about race.

First, the freshman's chief of staff compared more centrist Democrats to 1940s segregationists. Then Ocasio-Cortez, D-N.Y., accused Speaker Nancy Pelosi of "singling out" her and fellow newcomers, all women of color. By Thursday, the rhetoric escalated, overshadowing the agenda and pushing House Democrats way off message with the most divisive upheaval since they took control of the chamber this year. Longtime lawmakers were stunned.

"How dare they try to play the race card at this point," said Rep. William Lacy Clay, an African-American Democrat from Missouri who faces a primary challenge backed by allies of Ocasio-Cortez. He called those making the claims



Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, D-N.Y., listens as Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell testifies before the House Financial Services Committee on Capitol Hill in Washington, Wednesday, July 10, 2019.

"ignorant" of racial history. "It shows the weakness of their argument. It's damaging to this party and the internal workings of the Democratic party."

Rep. John Lewis, the Civil Rights icon, shared his view. Lewis said it was "a little too far" for the staff member to compare lawmak-

ers to segregationists. "We all must work together, pull together for the country's good," the Georgia Democrat said in an interview. "The great majority of the caucus membership tends to work together and get along. We need to go forward, not backward." The problems have been

Associated Press

developing for weeks, mounting as Congress struggled to pass a border funding package, but now may force a reckoning among Democrats that spills beyond Capitol Hill and into the 2020 campaigns.

Late last month, tensions grew between liberals, including Ocasio-Cortez and the "squad" of three other freshmen, and centrists from the Problem Solvers, Blue Dog and New Democratic caucuses over protections for migrant children and families in detention. With time ticking before funding ran out — and lawmakers set to leave town for the July 4th holiday — centrists revolted, forcing Pelosi to drop liberal demands and approve a more modest Senate version of the bill.

And then the fallout began. "Didn't realize this needed to be said, but: you can be someone who does not personally harbor ill will towards a race, but through your actions still enable a racist system. And a lot of New Democrats and Blue Dogs did that today," tweeted Saikat Chakrabarti, the chief of staff for Ocasio-Cortez. It was an extraordinary attack by a staff member on elected officials.

"This is in reference to my

comparing Blue Dogs and New Democrats to 1940s Southern Democrats," he wrote in another. "Southern Democrats enabled a racist system too. I have no idea how personally racist they all were. And we're seeing the same dynamic play out now."

That weekend, in trying to tamp down the divisions, Pelosi dismissed the influence Ocasio-Cortez and the squad — Reps. Ilhan Omar, D-Minn., Ayanna Pressley, D-Mass., and Rashida Tlaib, D-Mich. — in a Sunday newspaper column. But it seems to have only enhanced their stature. Allies of the foursome swiftly came to their defense, suggesting Pelosi was marginalizing the women of color who are the new face of the party.

Chakrabarti tweeted his own critique of Pelosi. Ocasio-Cortez told The Washington Post on Wednesday that "the persistent singling out ... it got to a point where it was just outright disrespectful ... the explicit singling out of newly elected women of color."

In a fundraising email Thursday, Justice Democrats, the progressive group that recruited Ocasio-Cortez to run for office, criticized Pelosi for "singling out four new leaders who are progressive women of color." The group is backing a handful of primary challengers to congressional Democrats, aiming for 25. On Capitol Hill, the centrists got to work. Aides were quick to point out the co-chairwoman of the Blue Dog Coalition, Rep. Stephanie Murphy, is a refugee and the first Vietnamese-American elected to Congress. Two members of the coalition are African American lawmakers who lived through segregation. One of the members of the New Democratic Coalition, Rep. Terri Sewell, who is African-American, represents her hometown, Selma, Ala., as well as Montgomery and Birmingham, Alabama, and had reached out multiple times to Ocasio-Cortez after the tweets, to no response. □

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ARUBATODAY
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By COLLIN BINKLEY

AP Education Writer

One of the nation's largest teachers' unions sued the U.S. Education Department on Thursday over a federal program that promises to forgive student loans for public workers but has been beset by problems.

The American Federation of Teachers filed a federal lawsuit in Washington alleging that the department has mismanaged the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program, violating the Constitution by denying applicants their due process rights.

The program was created in 2007 and promises to forgive student loans for graduates who made 120 monthly payments while working as teachers, nurses, police or other public workers.

But just 1% of more than 86,000 applications had been approved for loan forgiveness as of March 31, according to Education Department data, while thousands were told they had not made enough loan payments or were missing paperwork.

The union says the Education Department routinely makes errors while processing applications and has no appeals process for those who are wronged.

The suit targets the department and Secretary Betsy DeVos.

"Public Service Loan Forgiveness is a right, but Betsy DeVos has turned it into a crapshoot," said Randi Weingarten, the president of the union. She added that instead of helping borrowers, DeVos "has hurt and pauperized them."

Department spokeswoman Liz Hill says the agency does not comment on pending litigation but added that the department is "faith-



In this Sept. 17, 2018, file photo, Education Secretary Betsy DeVos speaks during a student town hall at the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia.

Associated Press

fully administering the complex program Congress passed."

Joining the lawsuit are several school teachers and other public workers who say they were denied loan discharges because the department miscounted their loan payments or because their loan servicers gave them inaccurate information.

The suit demands loan discharges for those public workers and says the department should identify other errors it has made and create a new appeals process to fight rejections. It says the department has "failed to make good on Congress's promise, denying PSLF to applicants on arbitrary and capri-

cious grounds, without any meaningful process to review erroneous decisions."

The program has been in turmoil over the last year amid complaints that its complex eligibility rules were never made clear. The deal applies only to certain federal loans, for example, and only for borrowers in certain repayment plans.

Scores of borrowers have complained that they made 10 years of loan payments in hopes of getting loan forgiveness, only to find out that they aren't eligible because they didn't have the right type of loan or payment plan.

A September 2018 report from the Government Accountability Office found

that the department had failed to make the rule clear to borrowers or to the loan servicer that processes applications.

Congress has allotted temporary funding to erase loans for borrowers who were rejected only because they had the wrong type of loan or payment plan, but the union says the department has failed to implement even that stopgap program.

Education Department data show that more than 12,000 applications had been submitted for the temporary funding as of March, but just 3.6% had been approved.

Democrats in Congress have blamed DeVos for failing to fix the program. □

but she blames Congress for creating a program with complex rules.

She has also said she doesn't think certain types of jobs should be incentivized over others.

A group of Senate Democrats proposed a bill in April that would simplify the rules and expand the offer to more borrowers.

Without a fix, advocates worry that the problem will only worsen. While fewer than 100,000 have applied for forgiveness since the application window opened in late 2017, Education Department data show that more than 1 million have taken the initial steps to have their loan payments counted for the program. □

Trump administration plans immigration enforcement operation

By SOPHIA TAREEN and COLLEEN LONG

Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP)—The Trump administration is moving forward with a nationwide immigration enforcement operation this weekend targeting migrant families, despite loud opposition from Democrats and questions over whether it's the best use of resources given the crisis at the border.

The operation had been postponed by President Donald Trump late last month and would target people with final deportation orders, including families whose immigration cases were fast-tracked by judges in 10 major cities, including Chicago, Los Angeles, New York and Miami. It has sparked outrage and concern among immigrant-rights advocates and lawmakers.

"Our communities have been in constant fear," Estela Vara, a Chicago-area organizer said Thursday at a rally outside the city's Immigration and Custom Enforcement offices where some activists chanted "Immigration Not Deportation!"

The sweep remains in flux and could begin this weekend or later, according to two administration officials, who were not authorized to discuss the matter publicly



Mony Ruiz-Velasco, center, director of PASO West Suburban Action Project, chants with demonstrators following a new conference outside the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services offices in Chicago, Thursday, July 11, 2019.

and spoke on condition of anonymity. Still, the American Civil Liberties Union pre-emptively filed a lawsuit Thursday in an attempt to protect asylum seekers. Meanwhile, activists ramped up efforts to prepare by bolstering know-your-rights pocket guides, circulating information about hotlines and planning public demonstrations. Vigils outside of detention centers and other hundreds of locations nationwide were set for Friday evening, to be followed by protests Saturday in Miami and Chicago.

The operation is similar to ones conducted regularly since 2003 that often produce hundreds of arrests. It is slightly unusual to target families, as opposed to immigrants with criminal histories, but it's not unprecedented. The Obama and Trump administrations have targeted families in previous operations. But this latest effort is notable because of the politics swirling around it. Trump announced on Twitter last month that the sweep would mark the beginning of a push to deport millions of people who are

in the country illegally, a near-impossibility given the limited resources of ICE, which makes the arrests and carries out deportation orders.

Then he abruptly canceled the operation after a phone call with House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, a California Democrat, while lawmakers worked to pass a \$4.6 billion border aid package. Plus, details had leaked, and authorities worried about the safety of ICE officers.

The agency said in a statement that it would not discuss specifics about en-

forcement operations.

"As always, ICE prioritizes the arrest and removal of unlawfully present aliens who pose a threat to national security, public safety and border security," according to the statement. Trump started hinting anew in recent days that more removals were coming. He said last weekend they would be starting "fairly soon."

"Well, I don't call them raids," he said. "I say they came in illegally and we're bringing them out legally." Ken Cuccinelli, the new head of Citizenship and Immigration Services, told CNN on Wednesday that the raids were "absolutely going to happen."

Pelosi said she hoped the administration would reconsider. "Families belong together," she said.

The administration has been straining to manage a border crisis, and some officials believe flashy shows of force in deporting families would deter others migrants from coming. But others have criticized any move that draws resources away from the border at a time when the Border Patrol is detaining four times the number of people it can hold. Also, a watchdog report found filthy, potentially dangerous conditions at some stations. □

Spanish-language reporter released from immigration custody

By ADRIAN SAINZ
Associated Press

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) — A Spanish-language reporter who has been facing deportation since his arrest 15 months ago while covering an immigration protest in Tennessee was released Thursday from custody as his case proceeds.

Manuel Duran was released from an Alabama detention center on a \$2,000 bail set by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Southern Poverty Law Center attorney Gracie Willis said.

"I feel like I'm reborn," Duran said in a statement released by the center. "I am happy for this day. It has been a very difficult time



In this April 3, 2018 file photo, Memphis police arrest Spanish-language reporter Manuel Duran during an immigration protest in Memphis, Tenn.

Associated Press

but thanks to God, this is the day I waited for."

The El Salvador native was arrested while covering an

downtown courthouse on the 50th anniversary of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination.

Protest-related charges were subsequently dropped, but Duran was picked up by immigration agents after he was released from jail and detained. He had been held in facilities in Louisiana and Alabama since his arrest.

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement has said Duran was taken into custody because he had a pending deportation order from 2007 after failing to appear for a court hearing. Duran has said he did not receive a notice to appear in court with a time and date on it. Immigration

activists and journalism organizations have spoken against his detention.

The Board of Immigration Appeals reopened Duran's case this week. Lawyers are seeking asylum, arguing that conditions have worsened for journalists in El Salvador and he could be in danger if he returns. The immigration board acknowledged that conditions for reporters have changed for the worse in Duran's home country since his initial deportation order, Willis said.

"We are certainly very excited for him to be released from detention," Willis said. "It's taken 15 months of very active litigation to get him here." □

Hospital fires 23 workers in case of excessive doses, deaths

By KANTELE FRANKO Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — The Ohio hospital system where excessive painkiller doses were given to dozens of patients who died fired 23 nurses, pharmacists and managers Thursday and said it is changing leadership, a sign that professional fallout from the scandal has expanded far beyond the intensive care doctor accused of ordering the drugs.

The announcement by the Columbus-area Mount Carmel Health System comes five weeks after that doctor, William Husel, pleaded not guilty to murder charges in 25 of the deaths, marking one of the biggest cases of its kind against an American health care professional. The newly fired employees include five physician, nursing and pharmacy management team members, President and CEO Ed Lamb said in a statement. Mount Carmel said the



In this Jan. 15, 2019 file photo, the main entrance to Mount Carmel West Hospital is shown in Columbus, Ohio.

Associated Press

other 18 fired were among the nurses and pharmacists who had been on administrative leave during its internal review.

One employee remains on administrative leave, and 11 are being given the chance to return to work if they complete additional training, Lamb said. Mount Carmel didn't specify whether those employees are nurses and pharmacists who administered or approved the excessive doses.

Authorities have said the nurses and pharmacists involved aren't being prosecuted, though dozens have been reported to their respective professional boards for review and potential disciplinary action.

Lamb also said that he is resigning this month and that Mount Carmel's chief clinical officer is retiring in September, paving the way for new leadership that could "facilitate healing and help restore the trust of the community."

Mount Carmel fired Husel in December and concluded

he had ordered potentially fatal doses for 29 patients who died over the past few years, including five who might have received the drugs when there still was a chance of improving their conditions with treatment. The hospital system said six more patients got doses that were excessive but likely not the cause of their deaths.

His lawyer in the criminal case has said Husel was providing comfort care to dying patients, not trying to kill them.

Husel, 43, was charged with murder only in cases involving 500 to 2000 micrograms of the powerful painkiller fentanyl, amounts far larger than typical doses.

Mount Carmel has tightened its drug policies and access and publicly apologized, noting it should have expedited its investigation. It acknowledged that Husel wasn't removed from patient care until four weeks after a concern about him was raised last fall, and that three patients died during those weeks after getting excessive doses he

ordered. The hospital system has resolved some of the related wrongful death lawsuits, reaching nearly \$4.5 million in settlements so far.

"We are deeply sorry for the additional grief and frustration this has caused and are working to provide reasonable settlements with affected families," Lamb said in the statement Thursday.

Twenty-two lawsuits remain pending.

In new filings this week, Husel's lawyer in the civil cases again argued they should be put on hold because of the criminal case.

A court magistrate previously declined to halt the lawsuits but did block the plaintiffs' lawyers from pursuing a sworn statement from Husel. Lawyer Gregory Foliano argues that isn't enough to protect Husel's right to a fair trial, in part because plaintiffs still can seek information from other Mount Carmel employees. The hospital also wants the lawsuits put on hold and has filed objections to the magistrate's decision. □

Expect another huge blob of algae on Lake Erie this summer

By JOHN SEEWER
Associated Press

TOLEDO, Ohio (AP) — Heavy rains that inundated the Great Lakes region this spring will fuel another massive algae bloom across parts of western Lake Erie later this summer, researchers said Thursday.

Scientists with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration expect this year's bloom to rank among the top five since it began measuring their severity in 2002, according to their annual algae forecast for the lake.

What's not known is how toxic it might be or whether it will pose a threat for cities in Ohio and Michigan that draw their drinking water from the lake.

Algae blooms that produce toxins and can sicken swimmers and harm fish are becoming an increasing concern nationwide,

causing water warnings this year from Vermont to the Gulf Coast.

Environmental officials in New Jersey have been telling people to stay out of the state's largest lake since late June and beaches in Mississippi have been closed in recent weeks by a bloom fueled by polluted Midwest floodwaters pouring from the Mississippi River.

Lake Erie, the shallowest and warmest of the Great Lakes, has been hit particularly hard over the past decade. It was five years ago when a toxic bloom caused a two-day shutdown of drinking water in Toledo.

Researchers, using a scale for rating the severity of the bloom, expect it to be a 7.5 this year — short of the most severe outbreaks this past decade but still a significant one. □



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Britain says Iranian vessels tried to block tanker in Gulf

By AYA BATRAWY

AMIR VAHDAT

Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — The British navy said it prevented three Iranian paramilitary vessels from impeding the passage of a British oil tanker in the Strait of Hormuz early Thursday, a day after Iran's president warned of repercussions for the seizure of its own supertanker.

Iran's Revolutionary Guard denied the allegations, saying if it had received orders to seize any ships it would have done so immediately. A U.S. aircraft was in the area at the time and the military has video imagery, a U.S. official said, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss security matters.

The incident came at a time of heightened tensions over Iran's unraveling nuclear agreement with world powers, signed in 2015. Iran recently began breaching uranium enrichment limits in response to the Trump administration's withdrawal from the agreement last year and its imposition of sweeping sanctions.

In recent months, the U.S. has sent thousands of additional troops, an aircraft carrier, B-52 bombers and advanced fighter jets to the region. Washington has blamed Iran for a series of mysterious attacks on oil tankers — charges that have been denied by Tehran — and said it shot down an American military surveillance drone in international airspace. Iran said it downed the drone after it veered into its own airspace.

The U.K. said in a statement that the British naval vessel HMS Montrose had been accompanying the commercial ship, British Heritage, through the narrow Strait of Hormuz, a crucial waterway for energy shipments.

"HMS Montrose was forced to position herself between the Iranian vessels and British Heritage and issue verbal warnings to the Iranian vessels, which then turned away," the statement said. "We are concerned by this



In this image from file video provided by UK Ministry of Defence, British navy vessel HMS Montrose escorts another ship during a mission to remove chemical weapons from Syria at sea off coast of Cyprus in February 2014.

action and continue to urge the Iranian authorities to de-escalate the situation in the region," it added. The HMS Montrose is on a three-year mission at the British navy's support facility in Bahrain, the hub of its naval operations east of the Suez Canal.

Russia and China, both signatories to the nuclear agreement along with Britain, France and Germany, called for restraint. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said "freedom of navigation should be ensured in the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz."

The U.S. 5th Fleet in Bahrain declined to comment on the incident.

U.S. Central Command spokesman Capt. Bill Urban said CENTCOM was aware of reports of "harassment and attempts to interfere with" the passage of the British Heritage near the Strait of Hormuz by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard's naval forces.

Threats to freedom of navigation require an international solution, Urban said.

Maritime security risk firm Dryad Global described the British Heritage as an oil tanker operated by BP and registered in the Isle of Man. Lloyd's List, a publication specializing in maritime affairs, said Shell had chartered the ship from BP.

Lloyd's List said the British Heritage had diverted from its route to load its 140,000-ton cargo of crude at Basra, Iraq, as planned on July 4, the same day an Iranian supertanker was intercepted off Gibraltar, a British overseas territory. It said the vessel instead headed to Saudi waters where it had remained for several days. Since July 2, at least 20 British-flagged ships have sailed through the Strait of Hormuz, according to Lloyd's List Intelligence data.

BP said the company's "top priority is the safety and security of our crews and vessels" and thanked the Royal Navy for its support. The British multinational oil and gas firm declined to comment further.

Shell stopped short of confirming reports it had chartered the British Heritage tanker, but told The Associated Press in a statement that "safety is our top priority." A spokesman said the company was monitoring the situation closely and expects all vessels it charters to consider relevant Department for Transport guidance on shipping in the area.

The department had already raised its risk assessment to the highest level for maritime security in Iranian waterways, according

to Lloyd's List. About 20% of all oil traded worldwide passes through the Strait of Hormuz from Middle East producers. Iran has periodically threatened to close the shipping lane if it is prevented from exporting its own oil. The U.S. sanctions have largely shut down its oil exports.

Despite the latest incident, the overall threat level for non-British ships using the critical waterway has not changed significantly, said Jakob P. Larsen, head of maritime security for BIMCO, the largest international association representing ship owners.

"With what we've seen now I'm certain trade will continue in the region," he said from Denmark. "Of course ship owners will take their precautions, and for British interests those would probably be a little more comprehensive."

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has asked Mideast allies like Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates in past weeks to contribute financially and militarily to a Trump administration proposal called the Sentinel Program — a coalition of nations working with the U.S. to preserve maritime security in the Persian Gulf and keep eyes on Iran. The semi-official Fars news agency carried a state-

ment from the Iranian Revolutionary Guard's navy on Thursday denying any incident had occurred.

"In the last 24 hours, there were no clashes with alien floats, especially British boats," the statement said. Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif dismissed the British allegations as "worthless," saying the claims "are being made to create tension," Fars reported.

President Hassan Rouhani had recently warned that Britain would face "repercussions" over the seizure of the Iranian supertanker last week. Authorities in Gibraltar suspect the vessel was breaching European sanctions on oil shipments to Syria.

Iran had also summoned the British ambassador over what it called the "illegal interception" of the ship. The operation to seize the Iranian tanker took place one week ago at the request of the U.S. Gibraltar port and law enforcement agencies were assisted by Britain's Royal Marines in the seizure.

The tensions have increased since President Donald Trump's decision last year to withdraw from the landmark nuclear agreement negotiated by the Obama administration. Trump has since re-imposed crippling sanctions on Iran, including on its vital oil exports, exacerbating an economic crisis that has sent its currency plummeting.

Europe has been unable to meet Tehran's demands for economic assistance to offset the American sanctions.

In recent weeks, Iran began breaching the limits of the deal, both on the stockpile of low-enriched uranium and the level of uranium enrichment. It also set an early September deadline for world powers to save the agreement, saying it would otherwise take a third step in going beyond the deal's limits.

Iran maintains it is justified in breaching the limitations because the U.S. already broke the deal with its unilateral withdrawal. □



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Crusader for Spain's abducted babies finds biological family

By JOSEPH WILSON

Associated Press

BARCELONA, Spain (AP) —

A woman who became a crusader for babies abducted during Spain's 20th-century dictatorship said Thursday that she has found her biological family and learned that her mother gave her up voluntarily. Inés Madrigal said that thanks to an American DNA bank she has found four half siblings five decades after her birth.

"I have four siblings, who are marvelous people and have opened their arms to me," she told a press conference in Madrid. "At last I have completed the puzzle of my life. Now I know who I am and where I come from."

Last year a court ruled that gynecologist Eduardo Vela abducted Madrigal in 1969, faking her birth by her adoptive parents and forging official documents, only to clear him because the statute of limitations had expired.



In this Monday Oct. 8, 2018 file photo, Ines Madrigal speaks to journalists outside a court in Madrid, Spain.

Madrigal now says that her newfound relatives have told her that her mother gave her up willingly.

That revelation appears likely to hurt her chances of getting a verdict against Vela when Spain's Supreme

Court hears her appeal to last year's ruling at a future date yet to be determined. The state prosecutor's office in Madrid issued a statement on Thursday to say that given the new twist in Madrigal's case it does

not consider that she was stolen.

But Madrigal said she remains convinced that Vela broke the law by hiding her true origins.

"He should have registered my birth and he did not

do so," Madrigal said. "He treated me like a puppy. The State never knew I existed."

Madrigal's case was Spain's first to go to trial in the widespread child trafficking that occurred from the onset of the country's Civil War in 1936 to the death of dictator Gen. Francisco Franco in 1975. Most lawsuits have been rejected by courts for coming after the statute of limitations expired.

Spain only started investigating the stolen babies cases a decade ago, when magistrate Baltasar Garzón opened a probe into the more than 30,000 children that were under the care of the right-wing regime.

Franco's regime took away the children of poor families, prisoners or political enemies, sometimes stripping women of their newborns by lying and saying they had died during labor. The children were then given to pro-Franco families or the church. □

Georgia will 'wait and see' if Putin's softer tone lasts

By JAMEY KEATEN

Associated Press

GENEVA (AP) — Georgia's

president says she'll "wait and see" how a debate in Russia about possible new sanctions against her country will pan out as she cautiously welcomed conciliatory comments from President Vladimir Putin as preferable to "threats." Salome Zurabishvili spoke to The Associated Press in an interview during a break from a conference she was hosting with European

leaders — including European Council president Donald Tusk — at the Black Sea resort city of Batumi. "I'm here to protect my people, and nobody is going to give me a lesson in patriotism," she said by Skype.

But her most timely comments came in response to passing remarks this week by Putin, who sought to lower the temperature by rejecting calls in Moscow to halt money transfers from Georgians living in

Russia and ban imports of Georgian wine and mineral water.

Putin said he wouldn't take such action "out of my respect for the Georgian people," adding that he "wouldn't do anything that would exacerbate our relations."

In response to Putin's remarks, Zurabishvili replied: "Well, we are going to wait and see what is the reality. But I would rather have these comments than have threats." □



In this file photo taken on Sunday, Dec. 16, 2018, Georgian President Salome Zurabishvili arrives to attend her inauguration in Telavi, Georgia.

Associated Press

Egypt arrests Mubarak supporter who criticized government

By NOHA ELHENNAWY

Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — Egyptian prosecutors Thursday charged the administrator of a Facebook page that supports former autocratic president Hosni Mubarak with spreading false news and undermining national interests after a post implied Mubarak did more to help Egypt's poor than the current government of President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi.

Karim Hussein, whose Facebook page "I am sorry, Mr. President" has more than 3 million followers, was arrested Tuesday, a few days after he posted video clips of Mubarak's old speeches, in which he expressed compassion for the poor and voiced his vehement opposition to lifting state subsidies. Mubarak was forced from power by a pro-democracy uprising in 2011.

The post came on the heels of the government's decision to raise fuel prices by up to 30 percent for the fourth time in three years — a move expected to inflict further pain on Egypt's middle class and poor.

"This is not first time (Hussein has) published online, but the catastrophe happened when he compared prices under Mubarak and el-Sissi," said Gamal Eid,



In this Dec. 26, 2018 file photo, former Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, center, arrives with his sons Alaa, left, and Gamal, right, to testify, in a courtroom at the National Police Academy in the Egyptian capital, Cairo.

an Egyptian human rights lawyer. "Then, he became accused of spreading false news. In fact, it is not false news and he has not committed any crime. He is just expressing his views."

Earlier this week, Hussein posted a photograph of Mubarak holding the trophy of the African Cup of Nations and surrounded by Egypt's triumphant national soccer team, which

won the African tournament several times under Mubarak's rule.

The post alluded to the early elimination of Egypt's national team from the current tournament, which Egypt is hosting. The defeat has been a source of embarrassment for the Egyptian government, which had hoped that hosting the tournament as well as winning it might boost its

popularity. Egypt under el-Sissi has implemented a sweeping crackdown on dissent, jailing activists, bloggers and others under vague laws that criminalize nearly any criticism of authorities. Egypt's military overthrew the country's first elected president, an Islamist who proved divisive, in 2013. Since then, authorities have rolled back freedoms won in the 2011 up-

Associated Press

rising that drove Mubarak from power.

On Thursday, parliament voted with a sweeping majority in favor of a presidential decree extending a nationwide state of emergency for another three months. El-Sissi's regime argues that emergency laws are needed to crush the Islamic militants he has been battling for several years, especially in the restive northern Sinai Peninsula. Human rights advocates complain the emergency laws are also used to repress peaceful political adversaries.

The High State Security prosecutor ordered Hussein's detention for 15 days. He was also charged with joining a banned group that seeks to undermine the state — an allusion to the Muslim Brotherhood organization, an accusation that has been recently brought against most critics of El-Sissi.

"The fabrication of allegations is no longer the exclusive work of the police or the state security apparatus but the prosecution has become involved too," said Eid, the rights lawyer. "This is very dangerous because people will lose faith in the judiciary and this will take us back to pre-modern times." □

Libya official: Car bombs explode near LNA leaders, 4 killed

RAMI MUSA

NOHA ELHENNAWY

Associated Press

BENGHAZI, Libya (AP) — At least two bomb-laden vehicles exploded Thursday near a group of Libyan National Army leaders in their eastern stronghold of Benghazi, killing four people and wounding 33 others and casting doubt on the LNA's 3-month-old offensive on Tripoli, the U.N.-backed government's capital.

The spokesman for the Benghazi-based rival government's Interior Ministry, Tarek El-Kharraz, said several senior LNA figures, including the commander of LNA special forces, had gathered in western Benghazi to attend the funeral service of a high-ranking



In this June 15, 2019, file photo, a vehicle and structure is damaged from fighting in the region of Tajoura, east of the Libyan capital Tripoli.

military general.

El-Kharraz said the dead in the attack included two civilians and two soldiers, and the wounded included civilians, army personnel and police. He said none of the military leaders was killed or wounded.

Associated Press

LNA spokesman Ahmed al-Mesmari said later there were three explosions and accused the U.N.-supported government of financing the attackers, but provided no evidence. Since Moammar Gadhafi's ouster in 2011, Libya has

been split between rival governments in the east and the west and an array of militias fighting over power and oil fields. The LNA, loyal to the rival government in the east, launched an offensive on Tripoli in April, setting off fierce fighting that has threatened to plunge the country into another bout of violence on the scale of the 2011 conflict that ousted longtime dictator Gadhafi and led to his death.

The LNA offensive on Tripoli led by Field Marshall Khalifa Hifter has been widely criticized by the U.N. and aid agencies. Over 1,000 people have been killed in the violence, most of them combatants but also civilians, and thousands have

been displaced. Shortly after the explosions Thursday, Hifter ordered an investigation into the attack.

According to El-Kharraz, the east-based government recently arrested a group of collaborators inside Benghazi who were in touch with Tripoli-based militias. During interrogation, they confessed that there were other cells of collaborators inside the LNA stronghold.

Col. Khalifa Alobiedi, a military engineer and expert on explosive devices present at the bomb site, said initial findings suggested the attack was caused by two bomb-laden cars. He pointed to two burnt vehicles about 10 meters (yards) apart. □



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N. Korea vows to respond to South's deployment of F-35 jets

By HYUNG-JIN KIM

Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)

— North Korea slammed South Korea over its ongoing deployment of high-tech U.S. fighter jets, warning Thursday that it will respond by developing and testing unspecified special weapons of its own to "destroy" the aircraft.

The statement, which also urged South Korea to abandon its "preposterous illusions" for improved ties, comes as Seoul has expressed hopes that a recent summit between President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un will help revive dialogue between the Koreas. Under its biggest-ever weapons purchase, South Korea is to buy 40 F-35 fighter jets from Lockheed Martin by 2021. The first two arrived in March and two others are to be delivered in coming weeks, according to Seoul officials.

The project was announced in 2014 to cope with then rising military threats from North Korea,



In this March 29, 2019, photo, a U.S. F-35A fighter jet prepares to land at Chungju Air Base in Chungju, South Korea.

Associated Press

which was conducting an unusually large number of weapons tests. Animosities have gradually eased since last year when Pyongyang and Washington launched nuclear negotiations, but Seoul has been moving ahead with its already-approved F-35 procurement. On Thursday, the North's Foreign Ministry fired off fresh criticism, claiming the second batch of F-35s is coming in South Korea in mid-July, something that Seoul officials won't confirm.

in South Korea." The South Korean government didn't immediately respond to the North's statement. But arms procurement officials said the F-35 project would proceed as scheduled and that about 10 of the 40 jets were to be delivered by the end of this year.

Despite the warning, it's unclear if North Korea can conduct a major weapons test any time soon because that would likely disrupt a positive atmosphere after the June 30 summit between Trump and Kim at the Korean border village of Panmunjom.

Though it lacked substance, the impromptu meeting was the first between Trump and Kim since their second summit in Vietnam in February collapsed

without any agreement due to squabbling over U.S.-led sanctions on the North, and the two leaders agreed to resume working-level nuclear talks. The latest statement didn't criticize the U.S. directly. It was seen as more of a continuation of North Korea's sensitivity to the introduction of sophisticated U.S. weapons on the Korean Peninsula, and dissatisfaction with Seoul since the Vietnam summit's breakdown. South Korean liberal President Moon Jae-in, who favors a negotiated resolution of the nuclear crisis, shuttled between Washington and Pyongyang last year to facilitate a flurry of diplomacy between the countries. He met Kim three times last year. □

Cambodia court charges 2 who protested gov't critic's murder

Associated Press

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia (AP)

— A court in Cambodia on Thursday formally charged two men in connection with protests marking the third anniversary of the killing of a prominent government critic. The Phnom Penh Municipal Court brought charges of incitement to commit a felony against two of seven people detained this week in connection with the anniversary of the July 10, 2016, shooting of Kem Ley, court spokesman Kouch Kimlong said. The other detainees were released



Soung Neakpean, center, arrives at the Phnom Penh Municipal Court in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, where he was charged with incitement to commit a felony, on Thursday, July 11, 2019.

Associated Press

without charges after questioning. Kem Ley was killed shortly after he spoke on radio about a report alleg-

ing that Prime Minister Hun Sen's family had taken advantage of its connections for financial gain. □



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Guatemala court asked to block 'safe 3rd country' with US

By SONIA PÉREZ D.
Associated Press

GUATEMALA CITY (AP) — Three former foreign ministers are asking Guatemala's Constitutional Court to bar President Jimmy Morales from entering into a "safe third country" agreement with the United States, days ahead of his visit to Washington announced Thursday.

Such an arrangement would require asylum seekers to apply for refuge in the first "safe" country they arrive in. That means Hondurans, Salvadorans and others who pass through Guatemala would not be able to go directly to the U.S. border and make an asylum claim there.

Critics of such a deal note Guatemala shares similar conditions of poverty and gang violence that are driving people to flee the other two countries of Central America's Northern Triangle. Morales' government said via Twitter that he is expected to meet Monday with U.S. President Donald Trump and also with other officials to discuss security, immigration and economic matters.

Presidential spokesman Alfredo Brito said Morales' visit is not for the purpose of signing a "safe third coun-



A Honduran boy, who is waiting with his family to request asylum, rests on an air mattress at the entrance to the Puerta Mexico international bridge in Matamoros, Tamaulipas state, Mexico, Friday, June 28, 2019.

try" deal.

Two U.S. officials with knowledge of the matter said, however, that a "safe third country" agreement with Guatemala is on the table and the hope is to have a signing ceremony while Morales is in Washington, though they cautioned that it was not a done deal. The officials agreed to talk about the matter only on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss it publicly.

Wednesday's court filing by the three former ministers was also signed by two former high-ranking diplomats and was made public Thursday.

It seeks an injunction against any agreement, arguing that Morales would be misusing a 1954 convention on simplified signing for international treaties to violate Guatemalan laws in response to pressure from Washington to slow a wave of mostly Central American

migration toward the U.S. border. Noting Morales has just six months left in office, the filing says an agreement "would allow the current president of the republic to leave the future of our country mortgaged, without any responsibility." It also says a possible agreement has not been made public, violating principles of government transparency. The court filing seeks to include in an injunction Guatemalan Foreign Min-

Associated Press

ister Sandra Jovel and Interior Minister Enrique Degenhart, who have been involved in immigration and security talks with the United States.

Later Thursday, former presidential candidate Manfredo Marroquín filed a separate petition for an injunction, arguing that such an accord would violate basic individual rights and that Guatemala cannot afford to receive thousands of asylum seekers.

In the face of a surge of migrants and asylum seekers arriving at the U.S. border this year, the Trump administration has sought to pressure other countries in the region to help stop the flow.

It has also wanted Mexico to become a "safe third country," though Mexico has resisted such an agreement.

Mexico has, however, cracked down on migration through its territory including the use of thousands of National Guard troops to assist enforcement. It also agreed to expansion of a U.S. program under which asylum seekers are returned to Mexico to wait while their claims slog through severely backlog U.S. immigration courts. □

US targets Venezuela intelligence agency with sanctions

By SCOTT SMITH
Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — The Trump administration imposed sanctions Thursday on Venezuela's military intelligence agency, which is accused of torturing to death a navy captain in its custody.

The latest move by the U.S. Treasury Department to pressure President Nicolás Maduro from power followed another round of negotiations in Barbados between Maduro's government and opposition leaders aimed at ending Venezuela's political crisis. Maduro's spokesman, Jorge Rodriguez, said the talks moderated by Norway that closed Wednesday resulted in a successful exchange, but gave no



A hearse containing the body of Navy Capt. Rafael Acosta leaves the morgue in Caracas, Venezuela, Wednesday July 10, 2019.

details and it wasn't immediately clear if any agreements had been reached. The U.S.-backed opposition is demanding early presidential elections, contending that Maduro's re-election last year was invalid. Few hold out hope for the

most recent attempt at dialogue. Several rounds of talks have failed to lead to solutions as Venezuela's political and financial crisis has deepened in recent years, sparking one of the worst migration crises in Latin America's history.

Associated Press

Maduro often says he is willing to negotiate to end hostilities and bring peace to the South American nation, but the opposition accuses the socialist government of using talks as a stalling tactic while continuing to threaten, torture and kill political opponents.

The Vatican extended its institutional prestige in 2016, attempting to mediate a dialogue that the pope later said "went up in smoke," placing blame on Maduro. A year later, a fresh round of talks in the Dominican Republic also fizzled with no constructive outcome. Meanwhile, crippling U.S. oil sanctions have exacerbated a crisis marked by food, fuel and medicine shortages that sent 4 million people — more than 10%

of Venezuela's population — fleeing the country in recent years.

The new U.S. sanctions target Venezuela's General Directorate of Military Counterintelligence. The sanctions appear to be largely symbolic because they prohibit Americans' dealings with the agency, which likely has few already.

The agency arrested Capt. Rafael Acosta on suspicion of plotting to assassinate Maduro. His attorney says he showed signs of torture before dying after a court appearance.

"The politically motivated arrest and tragic death... was unwarranted and unacceptable," Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said in a statement. □

LOCAL



The Minister of Culture declares:

The publication of 'The Archeology of Aruba: The Pictographs and Petroglyphs' is of great value to our cultural heritage.

ORANJESTAD – An archeological scientific catalog has been presented at the Archaeological museum of Aruba. This book is a compilation of results of the investigation lead by archaeologists Aad Versteeg and Harold Kelly based on the drawings dating from 1827 made by the indigenous people that lived on the island.

During the ceremony, Mrs. Ruby Eckmeyer, a representative from the Ministry of Finance, Economic Affairs and Culture, directed her comments to the audience on behalf of the minister Xiomara Ruiz-Maduro stating that the Minister praised the way these two great archaeologist teamed up to make such a wonderful publication.

'The Archeology of Aruba: The Pictographs and Petroglyphs' is a project of great value to Aruba. The minister wishes that this investigative work to be of great input in order for Aruba to someday make it on the UNESCO World Heritage list. With this, we will be able to show the world the culture we inherited from the indigenous people. The entire community of Aruba needs to be taught to protect and help conserve our cultural heritage. This book will give information to our future generations in order for them to learn to appreciate and enjoy our history and the drawings on the rocks.

Eckmeyer, on behalf of the Minister of Culture thanked Mr. Evelino Fingal who came up with the idea of this publication. Versteeg and Kelly were also thanked for their outstanding documentation. A special "thank you" was given to Fundacion 1403 sought funds for this publication.

Works are underway to have the archaeological museum open soon in order to share the rich history of our island to each and every one interested in our heritage. □



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The soundness and resilience of the financial sector in Aruba remained unabatedly strong in 2018

ORANJESTAD — The Centrale Bank van Aruba (CBA) publishes its FINANCIAL SECTOR SUPERVISION REPORT 2018. The CBA is the sole supervisory authority of the financial sector in Aruba. In the Financial Sector Supervision Report 2018, a legally mandated report, that has to be submitted to the Minister of Finance before July 1st of each year, the CBA provides an overview of the main activities it carried out and the principal policy decisions taken to implement the supervisory ordinances, including the laws to prevent and combat money laundering and terrorist financing.

This report also describes the main actions the CBA took to further strengthen the legislative and regulatory framework. In addition



to an outline of the recent developments in the international supervisory landscape, also an analysis is given of the most salient developments in the domestic financial sector.

As in previous years, in 2018

the CBA's core supervisory activities consisted of periodic onsite examinations conducted at the supervised institutions to assess key risks and compliance with the prevailing laws and regulations, and ongoing offsite surveillance. Off-

site surveillance includes reviewing the mandatory periodic financial and regulatory reports filed by the supervised institutions at the CBA and holding bilateral meetings with them.

Where deemed necessary, the CBA applies the instruments available to it to effectively enforce compliance with the prevailing laws and regulations. In case it identifies a situation of noncompliance with the supervisory laws and regulations, it may consider taking formal measures. That decision depends on, among other things, the seriousness of the case. In 2018, a total of 21 formal measures were taken (9 more than in 2017). An administrative fine was imposed in 14 cases, formal directives were issued to remedy the identified deficiencies in 5 cases, and a penalty charge order was imposed in 2 cases.

The CBA applies a risk-based approach in the execution of its supervisory tasks, whereby it allocates the largest part of its supervisory resources to the institutions and areas (e.g., the loan and investment portfolio, governance, risk management, and compliance) with the highest risk profile. This approach, together with its strict enforcement policy and its ongoing commitment to comply with the highest standards and best practices in the area of fi-

nancial sector regulation and supervision, has been conducive to maintaining a very solid and reputable financial sector in Aruba.

The financial sector supervision report also shows clearly that in 2018, Aruba's financial sector remained robust, profitable, and highly resilient to external shocks. The aggregated prudential ratios of the supervised sectors stayed within sound ranges. The nonperforming loan ratio of the commercial banking sector continued its decreasing path, from 4.0 percent at the end of 2017 and standing at 3.9 percent at end-2018. Furthermore, the stress tests conducted on the domestic banking sector demonstrate that this sector's risk-weighted capital ratio and prudential liquidity ratio, amounting to 32.2 percent and 29.8 percent, respectively, at end-2018 are highly adequate compared to the applicable minimum standards, to absorb significant external shocks.

As in previous years, during 2018 the CBA continued its efforts to strengthen the regulatory framework by issuing new or revised policy rules and guidelines. Below an overview of the most significant developments in this area.

1. Revision of the AML/CFT State Ordinance
Following the gap-analysis conducted vis-à-vis the 2012 FATF recommendations, in the second quarter of 2018, the CBA drafted a legislative proposal to address the mostly technical deficiencies identified. This proposal was submitted to the Government of Aruba in August 2018, which regretfully has not yet entered the legislative process. Also in light of the upcoming CFATF evaluation in 2020, it is of high importance that this proposal enters the legislative process as quickly as possible.

Continued on Page 15

Travel Tips

Aeropuerto Internacional
Reina Beatrix
ARUBA AIRPORT AUTHORITY N.V.

1. When checking-in, you will always need your valid passport, along with your ticket, e-ticket receipt or e-ticket confirmation. For some countries a Visa is also required.
2. For all US-bound departures, check-in three hours before your scheduled departure time.
3. For all US-bound flights, after check-in, leave building through the exit on the left side of building; follow the signs and head towards local immigrations, main security screening, shopping area and the departure gates. Aruba Airport provides full US Pre-Clearance service.
4. For all Non US departures, check-in may vary between airlines and destinations; always consult your airline for more information. Being at the airport 3 hours before your departure flight is always safe.
5. For all Non US flights, after check-in, leave building through the exit on the right side of building; follow the signs and head towards Local immigrations, main security screening, shopping area and the departure gates.
6. If traveling with a carry-on, there are restrictions on liquids, gels and aerosols you can carry in your carry-on luggage. Always check with your airline on limitations.
7. Always check the weight limit of your baggage; excess weight may result in penalty fees.
8. Always label your bags and suitcases with your name, address and phone number.
9. Always leave all carry-on items unlocked while passing through screening points to not cause delays if these need to be inspected.
10. Avoid wearing big belt buckles, clothing with metal buttons, lots of jewelry etc. when traveling. If you have these on, remove all metal items and place these in a tray for screening. It is advisable to put all metal items in your carry-on luggage until you clear security. This will help speed up the process.
11. Remove shoes at checkpoint and place in tray for x-ray machine screening.
12. All electronic items should be placed in tray outside their case for x-ray screening.
13. Avoid packing foods and beverages in your check-in baggage. When traveling to the US, you have to comply with the rules and regulations of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. More information <https://www.usda.gov/>.
14. If traveling with medication, please pack these in your carry-on luggage in their original packaging.
15. If you medical documentation, present this to the security checkpoint screener to inform them. The documentation is not required and will not exempt you from the screening process.
16. Take note of inadmissible items such as sharp objects, sporting goods, guns and firearms, martial arts and self-defense items, tools, explosive materials, flammable items, disabling chemicals and other items when traveling. More information available on www.airportaruba.com.

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The soundness and resilience of the financial sector in Aruba remained unabatedly strong in 2018

Continued from Page 14

2. Revised policy rule on banking license and admission requirements for credit institutions

As of January 1, 2018, a revised policy rule for license and admission requirements for credit institutions operating in or from Aruba came into force. Under this revised policy rule, the CBA only allows financial institutions with solid financial strength and reputation, subject to comprehensive and effective consolidated supervision, to have a major shareholding in a financial institution established in Aruba.

If in the CBA's opinion the condition of comprehensive and effective consolidated supervision by the home country supervisor is no longer met, or if it has significant doubts about the adequacy of the solvency of the parent company, then the shares in the Aruban credit institutions must be transferred to a (pure) holding company. With this revision, the CBA aims to prevent negative spill-over effects on the Aruban credit institutions.

Implementation of this revised policy rule is still in the preliminary stages.

3. Revised directives on the publication of the audited annual financial statements for credit institutions and insurance companies As of the reporting year 2019, based on the revised directives on the publication of the audited financial statements of credit institutions and insurance companies, the credit institutions and insurance companies are required to publish, among other things, their certified annual reports on their websites. The revision is in line with international standards on disclosure of financial information.

In October 2018, also in preparation for the already mentioned upcoming CFATF assessment of Aruba, the AML/CFT National Risk Assessment (NRA) was started, with an intensive 3-day workshop organized by the CBA for all relevant stakeholders. This important assessment is conducted in close cooperation with the World Bank and makes use of the tool developed by this institution.

The NRA is divided into five different working groups, dealing with the following five topics: (1) threats; (2) vulnerabilities; (3) banking; (4) other financial institutions, and (5) Designated Non-Financial Businesses and Professions (DNFBPs). The CBA is the project coordinator and chairs

working groups three and four. It also participates in the other three working groups.

The finalization of the NRA is planned for October/November 2019, which will provide detailed insight into the effectiveness of the current AML/CFT framework, as well as the AML/CFT risks Aruba is exposed to and identify the additional measures necessary to reduce these risks to acceptable levels.

To conclude, the strict and consistent enforcement of the supervisory and AML/CFT laws and regulations over the years has contributed to maintaining a stable, reputable, and healthy financial system in Aruba. In addition, the CBA works on an ongoing basis to uphold the highest international standards in the areas of financial sector supervision and AML/CFT.

However, in consideration of the upcoming CFATF assessment in 2020, swift progress needs to be made in the legislative area for Aruba to meet -to the largest extent possible- the 2012 FATF recommendations. No room exists for further delay.

The FINANCIAL SECTOR SUPERVISION REPORT 2018 is available on the website of the CBA www.cbaruba.org as of today. □

Send us Your Home Greetings Video

ORANJESTAD – Since a while Aruba Today has a column called Aruba To Me. Readers are invited to send their favorite vacation picture along with a text starting with "Aruba to me is ...". The column grew in popularity making the editorial department happy seeing this interaction with our readers realized.

It is wonderful to share the moments of joy of our readers who are vacationing here, but we can also imagine that there are people home who stayed behind and who are being missed. Aruba Today would like to give the opportunity to you as an appreciated reader to send a live greeting to your beloved ones that stayed behind. It can be your parent, child, sister, brother, neighbor who takes care of the cat, friends ... name it. Now is your chance, send us your Home Greetings Video!

What Do You Do

The only thing you need to do is record a short (maximum 1 minute) video with a greeting to home from Aruba and send it to email news@arubatoday.com. Also please write your name and where you are from as well as how long you will be staying in Aruba. We will post your video on the Facebook page of Aruba Today!

Please do note: By submitting photos, text or any other materials, you give permission to The Aruba Today Newspaper, Caribbean Speed Printers and any of its affiliated companies to use said materials, as well as names, likeness, etc. for promotional purposes without compensation.

Last but not least: check out our website and Facebook page! Thank you for supporting our free newspaper, we strive to make you a happy reader every day again. ☐

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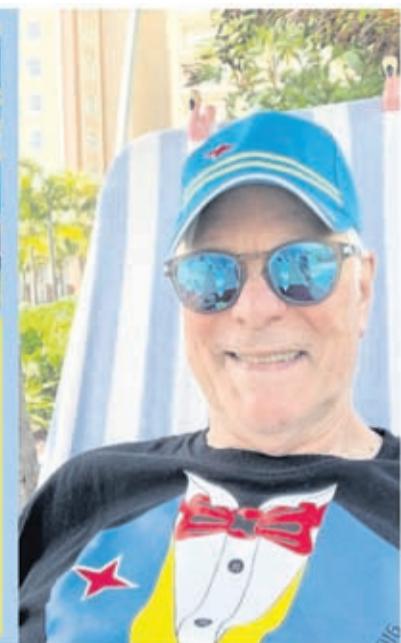
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For today's newspaper we received a great picture from:

Donald Alhart. He wrote:
Aruba to me is... Celebration of Friendship!!

Alhart celebrated the Flag Day together with good friends. They met a decade ago at the Marriott Surf Club and their friendship is being renewed every year since then at their home away from home.



For today's newspaper we received a great picture from:

Jim Friedman from Detroit. He wrote:

"Time with the FAMILY!" ☐



For today's newspaper we received a great picture from:

Margarita Caban from Connecticut. She wrote:

Aruba to me is... A trip to the Ostrich Farm

It's Margarita's first trip to Aruba but her husband Thomas McCarthy has been coming to Aruba for 40 years and he absolutely loves it here. In all these years this was Thomas first trip to the Ostrich Farm and they both had the time of their lives there. The tour guide was very kind, super fun and very informative. They even got to feed the ostriches. They were very excited and they absolutely love it. ☐



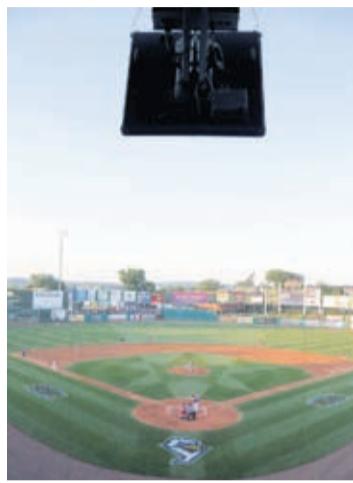
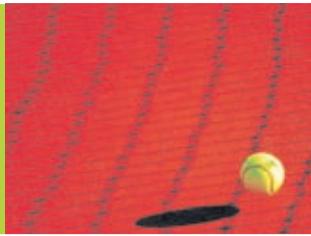
For today's newspaper we received a great picture from:
Greg & Jackie Berry from New Hampshire. They wrote:

Aruba to us is... Friendly Iguana's at Tropicana Resort.

The lovely couple has been coming to the island since 1995 and consider Aruba their Paradise. ☐



SPORTS



A radar device, top, is seen during second inning action in the Atlantic League All-Star minor league baseball game, Wednesday, July 10, 2019, in York, Pa.

Associated Press

'Robot umpires' debut in independent Atlantic League

By ROB MAADDI
AP Sports Writer

YORK, Pa. (AP) — "Robot umpires" have arrived. The independent Atlantic League became the first American professional baseball league to let a computer call balls and strikes Wednesday night at its All-Star Game. Plate umpire Brian deBrauwere wore an earpiece connected to an iPhone in his pocket and relayed the call upon receiving it from a TrackMan computer system that uses Doppler radar. He crouched in his normal position behind the catcher and signaled balls and strikes. "Until we can trust this system 100%, I still have to go back there with the intention of getting a pitch correct because if the system fails, it doesn't pick a pitch up or if it registers a pitch that's a foot-and-a-half off the plate as a strike, I have to be prepared to correct that," deBrauwere said before the game.

Continued on Page 23

SERENA SUPREME



Williams reaches 11th Wimbledon final

United States' Serena Williams reacts as she plays Czech Republic's Barbora Strycova in a Women's semifinal singles match on day ten of the Wimbledon Tennis Championships in London, Thursday, July 11, 2019.

Associated Press
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'Not about 24': Williams to face Halep in Wimbledon final



United States' Serena Williams returns to Czech Republic's Barbora Strycova during a women's singles semifinal match on day ten of the Wimbledon Tennis Championships in London, Thursday, July 11, 2019.

By HOWARD FENDRICH
AP Tennis Writer

WIMBLEDON, England (AP)

— Hours before her Wimbledon semifinal, Serena Williams spent some time deep in thought and arrived at a couple of conclusions.

For one thing, she shouldn't focus too much on trying to raise her Grand Slam title total to 24, a number achieved by just one other player in tennis history. And for another, she needs to stay calm on the court.

With that in mind, Williams went out Thursday and made it all look so easy, overwhelming Barbora Strycova of the Czech Republic 6-1, 6-2 in 59 minutes to once again put herself on the verge of an eighth championship at the All England Club and major No. 24 overall.

"It's really not about 24 or 23 or 25. It's really just about going out there and giving my best effort, no matter what. No matter what I do, I will always have a great career," said Williams, who at 37 is the oldest woman to reach a Grand Slam final in the professional era. "Like, I just kind of let it go this morning."

On Saturday, she will take on No. 7-seeded Simona Halep of Romania, a 6-1, 6-3 winner over No. 8 Elina Svitolina of Ukraine under a cloudy sky at Centre Court. It's the 11th final at the All England Club for Williams, the first for Halep, whose only major trophy came at the French Open last year. They've played each other 10 previous times, with Williams winning nine, including a three-setter at the Australian Open in January.

"I respect a lot what she has done and what she's doing," said Halep, who, like Williams, used to be ranked No. 1. "But now I feel stronger, mentally, facing her. We will see what is going to happen. It's just a big challenge for me."

For anyone, really, when Williams is at her best. And after an up-and-down first half of the year, due in part to injury and illness, she sure does appear to have lifted her level considerably.

Williams was limited to 12 matches in 2019 until last week. After a third-round loss at Roland Garros on June 1, she stayed in France for medical treatment and finally felt pain-free while preparing for Wimbledon. "Well, if she will play like this in the final," said Strycova, 33, the oldest first-time

Grand Slam semifinalist in the modern era, "it's going to be very hard for Simona."

After a three-set struggle against Alison Riske in the quarterfinals Tuesday, Williams was dominant against Strycova, who was limited by a leg muscle problem that cropped up in the very first game.

Strycova would repeatedly flex or shake her legs between points or try to stretch in her sideline chair by pulling her right foot onto her left knee and rocking her leg.

Not an ideal situation. Especially when facing Williams if she's this dialed-in. Williams played cleanly, accumulating nearly twice as many winners as unforced errors, 28-10. She was at her usual court-covering best, which

helped limit Strycova to 10 winners. "I just need to ... relax and do what I can do," Williams said, referring again to her deep thoughts from the morning.

"I was calm today," she said, then rolled her eyes and added: "It's a day-to-day basis with me. We all know that. I'm far from perfect."

Williams has been this close to adding to her title total before: In 2018, her first season back on tour after the birth of her daughter, Olympia, Williams reached the finals at Wimbledon and the U.S. Open but lost each time.

That has left her Grand Slam total at 23, a record for the professional era that she established when she won the 2017 Australian Open while pregnant — but one fewer than Margaret Court accumulated while playing part of her career against amateur competition.

At the All England Club, she was beaten by Angelique Kerber. At Flushing Meadows, she was outplayed by Naomi Osaka in a match that descended into chaos after Williams was docked a game for a heated argument with the chair umpire. She said in a first-person essay she wrote for Harper's Bazaar that she met with a therapist and wrote to Osaka to apologize for the whole episode.

A rare show of emotion from Williams on Thursday could have been the semifinal's turning point.

Ahead 2-1 in the first set while Strycova served at 30-all, Williams sailed a backhand return way long and let out a cry of "Aaaaah!" Maybe that got her going. Williams seized seven points in a row and 16 of 20 to close out that set.

Halep seemed headed for a long day when her semifinal against Svitolina began with a pair of games encompassing 32 points across 20 minutes. Five of the first 11 points lasted at least 10 strokes; two went 23.

Soon enough, though, Halep was in control.

Now comes a tougher task: beating Williams. □

Associated Press

Roberto Diaz shoots 62 to take John Deere Classic lead

SILVIS, III. (AP) — Roberto Diaz shot a 9-under 62 on Thursday to take the first-round lead in the John Deere Classic.

Playing in the final group of the day off the first tee, the 32-year-old Mexican player birdied four of the first five holes, eagled the par-5 10th and birdied three of the last five in the bogey-free round at TPC Deere Run. He took the lead with a 12-foot birdie putt on the par-3 16th.

"I just feel that everything clicked," Diaz said. "I've been playing pretty solid throughout the year. The driver has been awesome. I've been hitting a lot of fairways, and today I hit good numbers all day, and that helps."

Winless on the PGA Tour, Diaz tied for eighth at the Travelers Championship last month.

Americans Adam Long and Russell Henley were two strokes back. Martin Laird was another stroke back at 65 with Ryan Palmer, Andrew Landry, Vaughn Taylor, Zack Sucher and Ryan Blaum.

Long, who got his first career win earlier this season at the Desert Classic, had eight birdies — four on the front nine and four on the back nine.

Henley has missed the weekend cuts in his last four straight starts. But he highlighted an impressive birdie run by drilling a 55-foot putt on the par-3 7th hole. Scotland's Laird, who skipped his national tournament this week in an effort to boost his playoff positioning, followed up a 65 to close out last week's event in Minnesota with birdies on five par 4s on Thursday.

Palmer, the second-highest ranked player in the FedEx Cup standings in the field at No. 22, returned from a month-long family vacation with a strong round.

Palmer was somewhat inconsistent on his front nine before rallying for three birdies in a five-hole stretch. "Stress-free today, it felt like. Being off for four

weeks, traveling the world a little bit was fun. But I just came into the week just wanting to get my game back going for next week obviously," Palmer said. Twenty-year-old rookie Matthew Wolff, who picked up his first career win at the 3M Open last week, opened with a 67. Wolff, the youngest winner on the tour since Jordan Spieth won at Deere Run six years ago, hit 15 greens in regulation and played bogey-free.

"Having that PGA Tour card locked up is a lot of weight off of my shoulders," Wolff said. "Everything in my game feels really good right now."

Defending champion Mi-

chael Kim, who set the tournament record at Deere Run a year ago by winning by eight shots, had a 73. Kim has made just five of 28 cuts since winning in the Quad Cities.

Local favorite and past tournament champion Zach Johnson saw a streak of 40 consecutive rounds of even par or better at Deere Run come to an end after a 1-over 72. Johnson, who last shot over par there in 2008, missed a long birdie putt that would've kept the streak alive by inches.

"Frustrating. I mean, the good shots that I hit I didn't get anything out of it and the bad ones were, I'm scrambling a little bit," Johnson said. □



Roberto Diaz puts on the 9th green during the first round of the John Deere Classic at TPC Deere Run in Silvis, Ill., Thursday, July 11, 2019.

Associated Press

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Party of 5? Competitive NL Central in for taut 2nd half



Chicago Cubs manager Joe Maddon, center, yells toward the Pittsburgh Pirates dugout as he is restrained by umpire Joe West and Cubs' Kris Bryant (17) during the fourth inning of a baseball game in Pittsburgh, Thursday, July 4, 2019. Maddon was ejected.

Associated Press

By WILL GRAVES

AP Sports Writer

PITTSBURGH (AP) — Joe Maddon didn't let the free time created by a rare ejection go to waste.

Shortly after getting tossed by home plate umpire Joe West on July 4 following an outburst in which the Chicago Cubs manager appeared ready to take on any and all comers from the Pittsburgh dugout after taking exception to the way the Pirates kept pitching up and in to his players, Maddon retired to the visiting manager's office at PNC Park. He eased into a chair, opened a bottle of wine, flipped on the television and watched his wildly uneven team put the finishing touches on an 11-3 victory that avoided a four-game sweep.

Veteran move. Opportunities to relax over the next two-plus months will be scarce in the most competitive division in the majors. The National League Central enters the second half with the first-place Cubs and last-place Cincinnati separated by just 4½ games, an outlier during an otherwise yawn-inducing

first half in which five divisions reached the All-Star break with at least a 5½-game gap between first and second.

There are no front-runners in the NL Central. No room to breathe either, something Maddon saw coming long ago.

"I've been talking about this for the last two years how teams are getting better in our division," Maddon said. "It's not going to go away. It's going to be really difficult to really separate, especially by the fact that everybody is catching up right now. The second half is going to be very similar to what you've seen in the first half."

That's exactly what the Reds had in mind when they retooled over the winter in an effort to stop a streak of four straight 90-loss seasons. Cincinnati upgraded its starting rotation over the winter, added swagger when it acquired outfielder Yasiel Puig from the Los Angeles Dodgers and overcame a shaky 1-8 start to stay within striking distance in a division in which sustained momentum has been nonexistent.

"We're in it," Reds second baseman Scooter Gennett said. "It's pretty close, pretty tight. There's plenty of time to make a run."

Maybe, but that will require one team in the Central finding a way to get the better of the other four on a consistent basis. That didn't happen in the first half. Milwaukee is the only NL Central team with a winning record within the division (24-18) but has been unable to create any separation.

"It doesn't make me comfortable that we've been spotty," Brewers manager Craig Counsell said. "The division, we haven't, nobody has jumped out. Somebody will. It almost has to happen that some team is going to start playing really well. Nobody has dug a hole for themselves, and I think every team feels good about that in our division for sure."

First place, after all, is only a weeklong hot streak away. Not so much in the NL West — where the Dodgers have smashed their way to a 13½-game lead — or the NL East — where Atlanta's young core has given the Braves a healthy six-game

cushion over Washington.

"You can slow it way down knowing that we're only a few games back," Cardinals infielder Paul deJong said.

"Today's important, so we're focusing on today. We're not thinking, 'Oh, we're 7½ back and we've got to win 10 in a row.' All of a sudden you're thinking 10 games ahead and not focusing on winning today. For us, with the small deficit or small lead, every game's important so it locks us in the now."

And leaves each team with some interesting decisions to make as the trade deadline approaches.

The resilient Pirates entered the break just 2½ games behind the Cubs despite having 80% of its starting rotation spend time on the injured list at some point. All-Star first baseman Josh Bell's breakout season has helped. So has the impact of rookie outfielder Bryan Reynolds and rookie infielder Kevin Newman.

"We feel like we're here for the fight," Bell said. "We're ready for it. I like the guys that we have. We trust ourselves to be celebrating at

the end of the season." Then again, so does everyone else, which is one of the reasons the Central is so competitive. No one is rebuilding or transitioning from one core to the next.

"Each of us has our flaws, but there's a deep level of talent in this division, and you do, you have five teams that their ambition is to make the postseason," Pittsburgh general manager Neal Huntington said. "That's not the case in some of the other divisions. That's not criticism. Teams cycle in and cycle out. It's part of the industry. It's part of the game. It's been part of the game for decades."

So have pennant races. The Central's figures to go right down to the wire as it did a year ago, when Chicago and Milwaukee needed a 163rd game to determine a division winner. The Brewers emerged and eventually reached the National League Championship Series. The Cubs had to settle for a wild-card berth.

There may not be any sort of consolation prize for the runner-up this time around. The four teams running behind Chicago are as close to the division lead as they are to the second wild card, leaving all five clubs potentially vying for one postseason spot.

It's why Maddon — whose job status is tenuous at best just three years removed from leading the Cubs to their first World Series victory in more than a century — wants his players to buckle up and block out the noise.

"You have to circle the wagons at some point," Maddon said. "Because today's world, the way the speed of information and the way it's generated and the vitriol that's carried with it and the promotion of vitriol, you've got to get beyond that at some point and you have to insulate yourself."

And are they circled in Chicago?

"They're circled," Maddon said with a smile. "Circled." Considering what the Cubs are up against in baseball's tightest division, they better be. □

AP source: Russell Westbrook going to Rockets for Chris Paul

By TIM REYNOLDS
AP Basketball Writer

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Russell Westbrook and James Harden are together again, and Chris Paul is leaving Houston to make that reunion happen.

A person with knowledge of the situation says the Oklahoma City Thunder have traded Westbrook to the Houston Rockets for Paul in a swapping of top point guards. The Thunder also are getting first-round picks in 2024 and 2026, plus the right to swap first-rounders in two other seasons, according to the person who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity Thursday because the trade has not been announced. ESPN first reported the agreement. Paul is a nine-time All-Star, Westbrook an eight-time selection. Paul has 9,181 career assists, the most among active players. Westbrook has 138 triple-doubles, tied with Magic Johnson for second-most in NBA history behind only Oscar Robertson's 181. Both members of Houston's new glitzy backcourt are recent MVPs: Westbrook won it in 2017, Harden won it in 2018. And the trade means that the NBA's two



In this Monday, May 5, 2014 file photo, Oklahoma City Thunder guard Russell Westbrook (0) drives against Los Angeles Clippers guard Chris Paul (3) in the first quarter of Game 1 of the Western Conference semifinal NBA basketball playoff series in Oklahoma City.

highest scorers over the last five seasons — Harden with 11,958 points, Westbrook with 10,025 — are now teammates. Westbrook and Harden were Thunder teammates for three seasons, the last of those being the 2011-12 campaign when that duo and Kevin Durant took Oklahoma City to the NBA Finals. They lost in five games to LeBron James, Dwyane Wade and the Miami Heat, and Harden departed that summer for Houston — where he's

been an All-Star ever since. But when the Thunder agreed last week to trade Paul George to the Los Angeles Clippers — in a move that essentially sealed 2019 NBA Finals MVP Kawhi Leonard's decision to leave Toronto for the Clippers — it became clear quickly that Westbrook would be on the move as well. And this trade, when completed, will mean that Thunder general manager Sam Presti has added eight first-round picks to the team's

stockpile in the last week or so. Oklahoma City got five first-round future selections as part of the George trade. The Thunder are getting two more in this trade, and got a 2020 first-round pick in the deal completed earlier this week that sent Jerami Grant to Denver. It's the latest bold transaction in a wild offseason of movement that already saw Leonard become the first reigning Finals MVP change teams in the offseason after winning that

Associated Press

award, Anthony Davis get traded from New Orleans to the Los Angeles Lakers, All-Star point guards like Kyrie Irving (Boston to Brooklyn), Kemba Walker (Charlotte to Boston) and D'Angelo Russell (Brooklyn to Golden State) change teams, Durant leave the Warriors for Brooklyn, Jimmy Butler go from Philadelphia to Miami in a sign-and-trade, Al Horford move from Philadelphia from Boston.

"Craziest NBA summer by far," longtime NBA guard Jamal Crawford tweeted. Paul and Harden were teammates for two seasons in Houston. The Rockets had a 3-2 lead over Golden State in the 2018 Western Conference finals when Paul injured a hamstring, and the Warriors rallied to win that series in seven games on the way to the NBA title. This past season, Houston was ousted in the second round by the Warriors.

The 34-year-old Paul is owed roughly \$125 million over the final three years of his contract, including a \$44.2 million option for 2021-22. Westbrook, who turns 31 early next season, is owed \$171 million over the final four years of his existing deal. □

Steve Stricker lead suspended Senior Players

AKRON, Ohio (AP) — Steve Stricker topped the Bridgestone Senior Players Championship leaderboard at 5 under with a hole to play Thursday when the first round was suspended for the day because of lightning and rain.

Coming off a victory two weeks ago in the U.S. Senior Open at Norte Dame, Stricker had a hole-in-one on the 184-yard, par-3 seventh at Firestone Country Club.

Play was suspended at 12:55 p.m., and called for the day at 5:05 p.m. after just over an inch of rain soaked the course. Stricker was in the middle of the 18th fairway, facing a 140-yard shot on the par-4 hole, when play was stopped. He was set to resume play



Steve Stricker chips on to the 16th green during the first round of the Bridgestone Senior Players golf tournament, Thursday, July 11, 2019 in Akron, Ohio.

Associated Press

at 7 a.m. Friday. "Bummed that we didn't get to finish because that meant we could have slept in a little bit tomorrow, and then now we'll have to get out here just to hit that shot," Stricker said. "Hopefully, just one putt. And then we won't tee off until 1 p.m. Maybe go back and I don't know what we'll do — kill time, eat breakfast a few times or something. Yeah, it would have been nice to finish."

Stricker is seeking his third straight major victory on the PGA Tour Champions, a run that began with the Regions Tradition. He's playing the 50-and-over event instead of going for a fourth victory at the John Deere Classic on the PGA Tour.

"I wish they were different

weeks so I could play them both, but I decided to come here," Stricker said. "I'm happy I'm here and I'm not second-guessing my decision at all."

Paul Goydos was second at 2 under after five holes. Ken Duke shot a 1-under 69. John Daly (8 holes), Jay Haas (15 holes), Duffy Waldorf (12 holes), Wes Short (10 holes), Miguel Angel Jiménez (8 holes), Lee Janzen (5 holes), Corey Pavin (5 holes) and Bart Bryant (3 holes) also were 1 under.

Bernhard Langer was even par after six holes. He won the tournament three straight times from 2014 through 2016. Defending champion Vijay Singh was 1 over with two holes left. Stricker used a 7-iron on the ace. □

Teuns wins Tour de France Stage 6, Ciccone takes race lead

By JOHN LEICESTER

AP Sports Writer

CHAMPAGNEY, France

(AP) — Two Tour de France rookies stole the show on the first mountain stage, with Dylan Teuns of Belgium winning Stage 6 and Giulio Ciccone of Italy taking the overall race lead on Thursday.

Geraint Thomas, the defending champion, also rode strongly, going some way to answer questions about his fitness after he crashed out of the Tour de Suisse in June.

Thomas rode in fourth at the top of the terrible climb to the Planche des Belles Filles ski station in the woody Vosges mountains of eastern France.

But the severity of the ascent, with a final 24% incline and an unpaved section that kicked up clouds of dust, torpedoed other main contenders for overall victory in Paris on July 28.

Some riders were so exhausted at the top that race workers had to help them stay upright on their bikes after they crossed the line.

One of the big losers of the day was French rider Romain Bardet, a podium finisher in 2016 and 2017, who cracked and rode in 1 minute, 9 seconds after Thomas. He suffered the added indignity of having his chain jump on the line, immobilizing him.

Now 2:08 behind Thomas overall, Bardet will be hard-pressed to make up that deficit on even harder climbs to come in the Alps and Pyrenees.

Vincenzo Nibali, the 2014 Tour champion from Italy who also won the stage to La Planche des Belles Filles that year, came undone

this time. He lost 51 seconds to Thomas on the climb and is well down the overall rankings in 20th place, 1:07

fighting head-to-head for the win.

Ciccone cracked first on the eye-poppingly steep

in his plans. "It's strange but super good," he said.

The last three riders to hold the yellow jersey at the top

ished ahead of Egan Bernal, his teammate at Ineos who could yet become one of his main challengers



Belgium's Dylan Teuns celebrates as he crosses the finish line to win the sixth stage of the Tour de France cycling race over 160 kilometers (100 miles) with start in Mulhouse and finish in La Planche des Belles Filles, France, Thursday, July 11, 2019.

Associated Press

behind Thomas.

Teuns and Ciccone, both racing their first Tour, were rewarded for their enterprise and endurance on the climb and for having been part of a breakaway of 14 riders that sped away from the pack early in the 160.5-kilometer (100-mile) trek from Mulhouse that took the Tour up six climbs before hitting the last and hardest one.

At the top of that final ascent, Teuns and Ciccone were the two survivors of their breakaway group,

incline, as Teuns cranked on ahead of him to the line. "It was really hard. A man-to-man fight," Teuns said. "I finished it off. It was amazing."

But Ciccone got a delightful consolation prize, in the shape of the yellow jersey. "It's an incredible day. I can't grasp what's happening," the Italian said.

Having raced in the Giro d'Italia in May, where he won a stage, the 24-year-old came to the Tour to bank some experience. The yellow jersey was never

of the Planche des Belles Filles all went on to win in Paris: Bradley Wiggins in 2012; Nibali in 2014; Chris Froome in 2017.

But Ciccone doesn't expect to follow in their footsteps.

His Trek-Segafredo team is built around Australian rider Richie Porte, who also got dropped by Thomas but limited the damage, riding in just 9 seconds after the Welshman.

Another sign that Thomas isn't hampered by his crash in June was that he also fin-

for the Tour title.

Overall, Thomas climbed to fifth overall, 49 seconds behind Ciccone and leap-frogging Bernal, in sixth and now 4 seconds behind Thomas. "It was a decent day," Thomas said.

The previous wearer of the iconic yellow jersey, French rider Julian Alaphilippe, did everything he could to keep it, battling up the ascent, through the dust.

But Alaphilippe fell just 6 seconds short, losing the race lead he first took on Stage 3. □

Boxing champ Lebedev retires after fights fall through

MOSCOW (AP) — Former world cruiserweight boxing champion Denis Lebedev retired on Thursday aged 39 after a lengthy and colorful career.

Lebedev won the interim WBA cruiserweight title in 2011 against James Toney, and successfully defended it eight times to 2017.

"The time has come to leave elite sport," he said on Instagram.

"As a real man, husband and father, I must

focus on my big family and try to give as much attention as possible to those closest to me."

He also held the IBF belt in 2016, winning it from Victor Emilio Ramirez before losing it to fellow Russian Murad Gassiev seven months later.

Known for entering the ring in Russian paratrooper uniform, Lebedev finishes with a 32-2 win-loss record, 23 by knockout.

His defeat to Guillermo Jones in 2013 was later changed to a no-contest when the Panamanian failed a drug test.

Lebedev had been hoping to fight the then-unified cruiserweight champ Oleksandr Usyk, but the Ukrainian moved up to heavyweight in March.

A planned fight with France's Arsen Goulamirian collapsed last week.

Lebedev hasn't fought since last November. □

'Robot umpires'

Continued from Page 17

It didn't appear deBrauwe had any delay receiving the calls at first, but players noticed a big difference.

"One time I already had caught the ball back from the catcher and he signaled strike," said pitcher Daryl Thompson, who didn't realize the technology was being used until after he disagreed with a call.

Infielder L.J. Mazzilli said a few times hitters who struck out lingered an extra second or so in the batter's box waiting on a called third strike.

"The future is crazy, but it's cool to see the direction of baseball," said Mazzilli a son of former big league player and manager Lee Mazzilli.

The umpires have the ability to override the computer, which considers a pitch a strike when the ball bounces and then crosses the zone. TrackMan also does not evaluate checked swings.

Former big leaguer Kirk

Nieuwenhuis doesn't like the idea of giving umps veto power.

"If the umpire still has discretion, it defeats the purpose," said Nieuwenhuis, who batted .221 with 31 homers in 978 at-bats with the Mets, Angels and Brewers.

About 45 minutes before first pitch, the public address announcer directed fans to look up at the black screen hanging off the face of the upper level behind the plate and joked they could blame the computer for any disagreements over calls. "This is an exciting night for MLB, the Atlantic League, baseball generally," said Morgan Sword, MLB's senior vice president of economics and operations. "This idea has been around for a long time and it's the first time it's been brought to life in a comprehensive way."

The experiment with radar-tracking technology to call balls and strikes was originally expected to begin at the start of the season but experienced some delays.

Atlantic League President



Home plate umpire Brian deBrauwere, left, wears an earpiece as Liberty Division's Tyler Ladendorf, right, of the High Point Rockers, swings at a pitch from Freedom Division's Mitch Atkins, of the York Revolution, during the first inning of the Atlantic League All-Star minor league baseball game, Wednesday, July 10, 2019, in York, Pa.

Associated Press

Rick White said it's going to be implemented league-wide over the next few weeks.

"After that, we're relatively confident that it's going to spread through organized baseball," White said.

"We're very excited about what this portends not only for our league but for the future of baseball. What we know is technology can

help umpires be more accurate and we're committed to that. We think the Atlantic League is being a pioneer for all of the sport."

Sword said MLB hasn't received much pushback from umpires.

"One of our focuses is not to replace the umpire," Sword said. "In fact, we're trying empower the umpire with technology. The home

plate umpire has a lot more to do than call balls and strikes and he's going to be asked to do all of that. We're in touch with our umpires' union and this is the first step of the process."

DeBrauwere had no issue with it. "This is just another plate job and I just get a little help on this one so I feel very relaxed going into this one," he said. □

Jim Bouton, ex-Yankees pitcher and 'Ball Four' author, dies

GREAT BARRINGTON, Mass. (AP) — Jim Bouton, the former New York Yankees pitcher who shocked and angered the conservative baseball world with the tell-all book "Ball Four," has died. He was 80.

Bouton's family said he died Wednesday at the Great Barrington home he shared with wife Paula Kurman. He fought a brain disease linked to dementia and was in hospice care. Bouton also had two strokes in 2012. Published in 1970, "Ball Four" detailed Yankees great Mickey Mantle's carousing and the use of stimulants in the major leagues. Bouton's revealing look at baseball off the field made for eye-opening and entertaining reading, but he paid a big price for the best-seller when former teammates and players and execu-

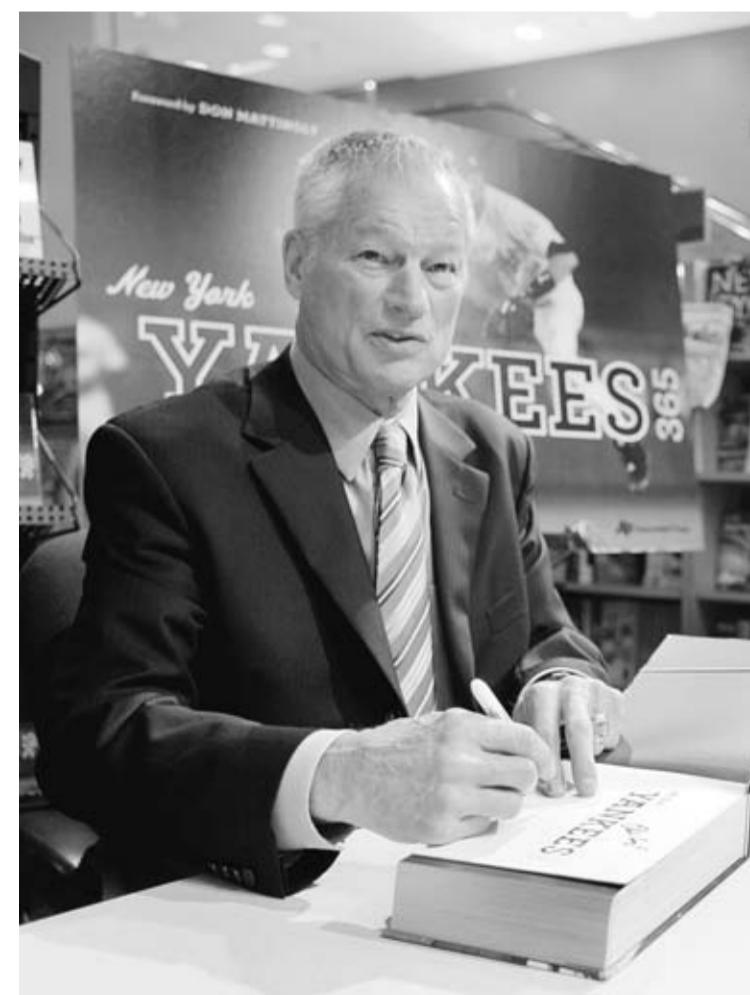
tives across baseball ostracized him for exposing their secrets. He wasn't invited to the Yankees' Old-Timers' Day until 1998. Throwing so hard that his cap often flew off his head, Bouton was 21-8 with six shutouts in 1963 — his second season in the majors and his only year as an All-Star — and went 18-13 with four more shutouts in 1964. The Yankees lost the World Series both years, with Bouton losing his lone start in 1963 in New York's loss to the Los Angeles Dodgers and winning twice the following year in the Yankees' loss to the St. Louis Cardinals.

Bouton injured his right arm in 1965, going 4-15 that season, and saw limited action the next three seasons with New York. He worked on "Ball Four" in 1969, a season spent with the expansion Seattle Pilots and Houston

Astros, his fastball replaced by a knuckleball as he tried to prolong his career.

Bouton was a television sportscaster in New York City with WABC and WCBS, wrote other books, appeared in the 1973 movie "The Long Goodbye" and starred in a 1976 CBS sitcom based on "Ball Four" that lasted only five episodes. He and a former teammate developed Big League Chew, a bubble gum alternative to tobacco.

Born in Newark, New Jersey, Bouton was raised in New Jersey and the Chicago area. He pitched at Western Michigan University before signing with the Yankees in 1958. He made it to the majors in 1962, going 7-7, but didn't appear in the Yankees' World Series victory over the San Francisco Giants. □



In this Wednesday, Oct. 7, 2009 file photo, Former New York Yankees pitcher Jim Bouton signs copies of the Associated Press book "New York Yankees 365," in New York.

Associated Press

Trump accuses big tech of bias against conservative voices



President Donald Trump speaks during the "Presidential Social Media Summit" in the East Room of the White House, Thursday, July 11, 2019, in Washington. Associated Press

By KEVIN FREKING and MARCY GORDON

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump said Thursday that big tech companies must not be allowed to censor the voices of the American people on social media, even as he hailed conservative critics for using the platforms to get around the "fake news filter."

Trump has weaponized social media to eviscerate opponents and promote himself. He convened Thursday's White House "social media summit" of like-minded critics of Big Tech, excluding representatives from the very platforms he exploits.

Earlier Thursday, Trump sent a stream of Twitter messages lashing out at social media companies and the press, familiar targets that resonate with his conservative base.

The meeting represented an escalation of Trump's battle with companies like Facebook, Google and even his preferred communications outlet, Twitter. The president has claimed, without evidence, that the companies are "against me" and even suggested

U.S. regulators should sue them on grounds of anti-conservative bias.

In remarks to the participants, whom Trump called "online journalists and influencers," Trump said, "You're challenging the media gatekeepers and corporate censors to bring the truth to the American people."

"You communicate directly with our citizens without going through the fake news filter," he said.

Trump signaled tough actions ahead by his administration against big tech companies.

The firms already are under closer scrutiny than ever by regulators and in Congress following a stream of scandals including Facebook's lapses opening the personal data of millions of users to Trump's 2016 campaign, and a bipartisan push for new data privacy legislation has emerged in Congress. Regulators at the Justice Department and the Federal Trade Commission are pursuing antitrust investigations of Facebook, Google, Apple and Amazon.

Trump's volley of Twitter messages Thursday had familiar targets — "certain

companies," the press and his Democratic rivals — that have proven resonance with his political base. The president predicted, without foundation, the demise of the press and the social media platforms if he loses to a Democrat in 2020. He hailed himself as "so great looking and smart, a true Stable Genius!"

A "big subject" of the summit would be "the tremendous dishonesty, bias, discrimination and suppression practiced by certain companies," Trump said in his tweets.

"We will not let them get away with it much longer," he said.

Among the conservative organizations expected to participate in the White House meeting are Turning Point USA, a nonprofit; PragerU, short for Prager University, which puts out short videos with a conservative perspective on politics and economics; the Media Research Center; and the Heritage Foundation, a Washington think tank.

Accusations commonly leveled by conservatives against the social media platforms include anti-religious bias, a tilt against

abortion foes and censorship of conservative political views.

Trump has made it a priority to reach out to voters who oppose abortion. The anti-abortion groups Live Action and Susan B. Anthony List say Twitter has blocked their advertising. By policy, Twitter prohibits paid ads with content "that is inflammatory or provocative and is likely to evoke a strong negative reaction."

Donald Trump Jr. weighed in on the subject Wednesday, tweeting, "Twitter: We won't allow pro-life groups like @LiveAction to run ads on our 'platform' & if you're a conservative we might ban you for 1st Amendment protected speech that we arbitrarily deem 'offensive.'"

While some Silicon Valley company executives may lean liberal, they have asserted that their products are without political bias.

Representatives for Facebook, Google and Twitter have declined to comment specifically on the White House meeting. The Internet Association, the industry's major trade group representing Facebook, Google and dozens of other companies, said online

platforms "are the best tool for promoting voices from all political perspectives in history."

"Internet companies are not biased against any political ideology, and conservative voices in particular have used social media to great effect," the group's president Michael Beckerman said in a statement Thursday. "Internet companies depend upon their users' trust from across the political spectrum to grow and succeed."

Facebook has banned extremist figures such as Alex Jones of Infowars and Louis Farrakhan of the Nation of Islam. Twitter has banned hate speech on the basis of someone's race, gender and other categories. Twitter broadened its policy this week to include banning language that dehumanizes others based on religion, and the company said it may also ban similar language aimed at other groups, such as those defined by gender, race and sexual orientation.

"I've never seen evidence of tech firm bias against conservatives," said Rep. David Cicilline, D-R.I., who has been sharply critical of the big companies for reasons of their market dominance and effect on competition. He leads a House Judiciary subcommittee that has opened a bipartisan probe into the tech giants' market conduct.

"If someone wants to show me some empirical data, instead of some alt-right member's paranoid claims, I'd appreciate it," Cicilline said in a statement Wednesday.

Trump has an estimated 61 million followers on Twitter and uses the platform almost daily to speak directly to his followers. He has a knack for tweeting outrageous, divisive or tongue-in-cheek missives that spur frenzied reactions from the mainstream press.

At the same time, Trump has accused Twitter, without evidence, of making it "very hard for people to join me" and "very much harder for me to get out the message." □

Associated Press

Dow Jones industrials cross 27,000 points for first time

By ALEX VEIGA
Associated Press

Technology and big health care sector companies helped drive stocks higher on Wall Street in midday trading Thursday, pushing the Dow Jones Industrial Average above 27,000 for the first time.

The Dow's milestone comes a day after the S&P 500 index briefly climbed above 3,000 for the first time and the Nasdaq composite closed at an all-time high. The three major indexes were on track to close at all-time highs Thursday.

The market shook off a two-day slide earlier this week and has been trending higher as investors have grown more confident that the Federal Reserve may cut interest rates for the first time in a decade as soon as the end of this month.

On Wednesday, Fed Chairman Jerome Powell said that many Fed officials believe a weakening global economy and rising trade tensions have strengthened the case for a rate cut. The remarks came as Powell gave testimony before the House Financial Services Committee.

New data showing consumer prices rose in June from a year earlier wasn't expected to give the Fed reason to reconsider whether it should lower rates, if necessary. Inflation has remained muted through much of the economy's 10 year expansion, which Powell has said cited as a justification for potentially lowering rates.



In this July 5, 2019, file photo trader Benjamin Tuchman works at the New York Stock Exchange in New York.

Chipmaker Nvidia led the technology sector higher, climbing 4.4%.

Cigna, CVS Health and UnitedHealth Group topped the gainers in the S&P 500 after the White House withdrew a drug rebate plan that had aimed to reduce the cost of medications for people on Medicare by shifting rebates from insurers and distributors to patients.

KEEPING SCORE: The S&P 500 rose 8 points, or 0.3%, to 3,001 as of 12:06 p.m. Eastern Time.

The Dow gained 199 points, or 0.7%, to 27,059. The Nasdaq composite rebounded after a brief slip, climbing 0.3%. Major stock indexes in Europe fell.

THE QUOTE: "With the markets at 27,000 on the Dow and 3,000 on the S&P,

they're baking in that a deal gets done with China, that the Fed cuts rates and remains dovish and then earnings and guidance come in better than expected," said Sean Lynch, managing director of equities at Wells Fargo Private Bank. "We get a hiccup in any one of those, you'll see a little bit of a pullback in the market."

SECTOR BY SECTOR: Retailers and other consumer-focused companies also notched gains. Lowe's Cos. rose 1.6%. Kohl's added 1.2%. Banks also helped lift the market. They got a boost from a pickup in the yield on the 10-year Treasury note, which rose to 2.10% from 2.06% late Wednesday. When bond yields rise, they push interest rates on mortgages

and other loans higher, making them more profitable for lenders. Goldman Sachs Group gained 1.8%. Despite the gains for big health care companies, the sector was down overall. Merck & Co. dropped 3.5%. Energy stocks were the biggest laggard. Cimarex Energy dropped 1%. Real estate and materials stocks also fell.

Real estate and utilities stocks also took losses, a sign that investors were shifting money away from less risky assets.

EARNINGS PICTURE: Traders also weighed a mix of corporate earnings reports, Delta Air Lines and aviation maintenance company Air notched gains after their latest quarterly results topped Wall Street's forecasts. Bed Bath & Beyond

Associated Press

and Fastenal slumped on disappointing results.

Corporate earnings will keep investors busy starting next week, when S&P 500 companies begin reporting results for the April-June quarter.

Companies have been lowering expectations for how much profit they made in the quarter. Wall Street now projects that overall S&P 500 company earnings for the quarter fell 2.6% from a year earlier, according to FactSet. As recently as the end of March, earnings were forecast to be down only 0.5%. This could be the first time in three years that S&P 500 companies report a back-to-back decline in overall earnings.

DRUG REBATE PLAN SCRAPPED: Drugstore chains rose after President Donald Trump withdrew a drug rebate plan that aimed to reduce the financial bite of costly medications for people on Medicare.

The once-highly promoted plan from Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar ran into opposition within the White House. The pushback grew after the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office estimated the plan would have little impact on manufacturer prices and would cost Medicare \$177 billion over 10 years because it would lead to higher premiums subsidized by taxpayers. Cigna surged 11.6%, CVS Health gained 5.5% and UnitedHealth climbed 5.1%..

Powell again signals Fed is prepared to cut interest rates

By MARTIN CRUTSINGER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell, testifying for a second day before Congress, is delivering the same message: that the central bank is prepared to cut interest rates to support the economy, raising hopes that the first reduction in its key policy rate in a decade could happen later this month.

Powell's prepared testimony to the Senate Bank-

ing Committee on Thursday was identical to the remarks he delivered Wednesday before the House Financial Services Committee on Wednesday.

"Uncertainties around trade tensions and concerns about the strength of the global economy continue to weigh on the U.S. economic outlook," Powell said in his opening comments. Powell's remarks on Wednesday sent stocks surging as investors believed the Fed chairman

was sending his strongest signal yet that the Fed was ready to cut its policy rate, which currently stands in a range of 2.25% to 2.5%.

The Fed raised rates four times in 2018, drawing the ire of President Donald Trump, who has called the central bank clueless by pursuing needless rate hikes that have slowed economic growth and depressed stock gains. Much of Trump's criticism has focused on Powell, his choice as Fed chairman. The presi-

dent has said he has the power to fire Powell or de-

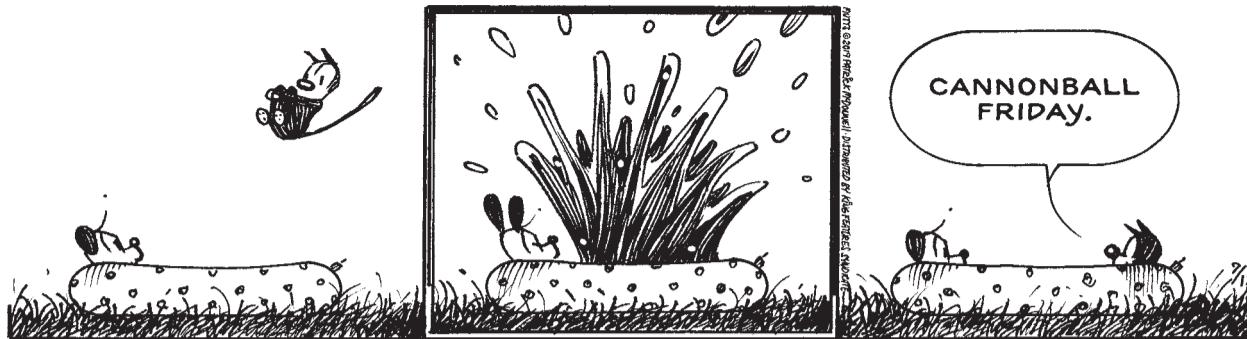
pose him, something that legal experts dispute.



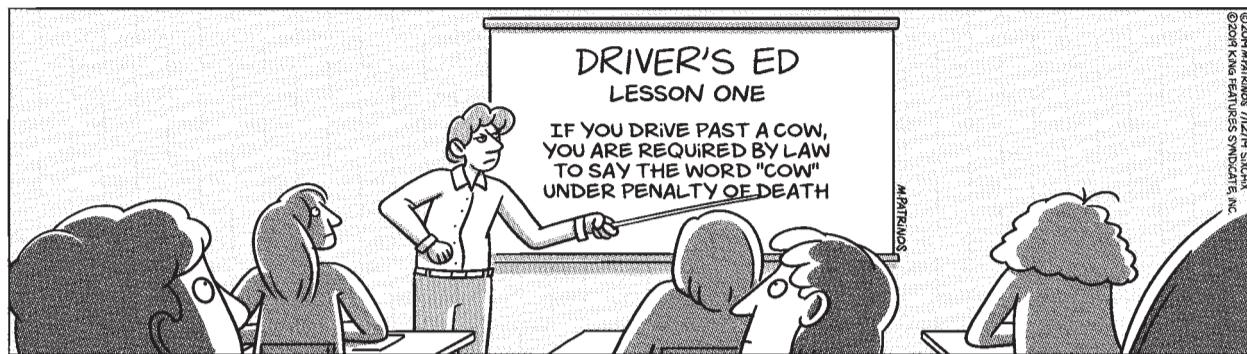
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Blondie



Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

								9
6							9	
1	3	8			4			7
2	7					6	5	
6	1					2	8	
5						6	3	7
					3		5	
				4				

Difficulty Level ★★★★

7/12

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

8	6	5	9	7	1	3	4	2
2	4	3	8	6	5	7	9	1
9	1	7	2	3	4	8	5	6
1	8	6	4	9	7	5	2	3
4	5	2	3	1	6	9	7	8
7	3	9	5	2	8	1	6	4
3	7	1	6	4	9	2	8	5
5	2	4	7	8	3	6	1	9
6	9	8	1	5	2	4	3	7

Yesterday's puzzle answer



ACROSS

- 1 Close-fitting
- 5 Swat
- 9 Reverberate
- 13 Sharpener
- 15 Singer Perry
- 16 Exhibition
- 17 Join forces
- 18 Turbulence
- 20 Neighbor of Calif.
- 21 Mario — Peebles
- 23 Inclines
- 24 Royal decree
- 26 Stolen
- 27 Singer & songwriter King
- 29 Someone else listed in a will
- 32 Theater walkway
- 33 Greek letter
- 35 Janitor's item
- 37 Camembert kin
- 38 Swimming spots
- 39 Egg on
- 40 Place
- 41 Mr. Castro
- 42 Kind of ID
- 43 Bundle of energy
- 45 — up; arranged in twos
- 46 Frazier foe
- 47 Jeer at
- 48 Husband or wife
- 51 Billboards
- 52 "Silent night, holy night, ____."
- 55 Friendly
- 58 Man's name
- 60 Waggish
- 61 Bean curd
- 62 Waterbirds
- 63 Track-and-field event
- 64 On the — with; not speaking to
- 65 Busy buzzers

Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

7/19

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

Y	E	W	S	H	I	F	T	T	H	I	S
E	X	E	S	C	E	L	L	O	H	R	A
S	I	A	M	R	I	L	E	D	U	P	O
T	R	A	V	E	R	S	E	D	M	E	N
S	E	W	S	L	A	B					
S	A	S	H	A	Y	S	T	E	S	O	N
C	R	E	E	L	T	E	R	P	E	P	
R	E	E	D	R	E	A	D	S	H	R	
A	N	D	H	E	L	P	O	N	F	O	D
P	A	S	S	A	B	L	E	D	S	R	Y
I	D	O	H	O	D						
S	H	O	U	P	P	M					
L	O	N	N	O	N	S					
A	B	L	D	R	O	N					
T	O	S	Y	R	A	L					

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7/19

- 38 Olive stuffing
- 39 Cowboy wear
- 41 Quiz answer
- 42 Stopped for a bit
- 44 Nothingness
- 45 Cushion
- 47 Anklebone
- 48 Con job
- 49 Tiny skin opening
- 50 — in a while; periodically
- 53 Take to
- 54 Fewer
- 56 Debtor's note
- 57 Nautical term
- 59 Stroke



Koko, the chimpanzee hangs from a railing in a special compartment at the Skopje zoo, in Skopje, North Macedonia, Thursday, July 11, 2019.

Associated Press

Skopje zoo's chimp returns after recovering from depression

By KONSTANTIN TESTORIDES

Associated Press

SKOPJE, North Macedonia (AP) — Koko the chimpanzee, once a star in Skopje's zoo, has returned home after spending 10 years in the Netherlands recovering from depression, the zoo says.

Koko was reunited with his keeper, Dragan Trajkovski, on Thursday, who said he was overjoyed to see the chimp again.

"It was a joy I cannot describe," the 49-year-old told The Associated Press. "After 10 years, Koko recognized me. We touched each other, he turned his back for a little scratching and pursed his mouth in a chimp kiss."

Koko was born in the zoo of North Macedonia's capital

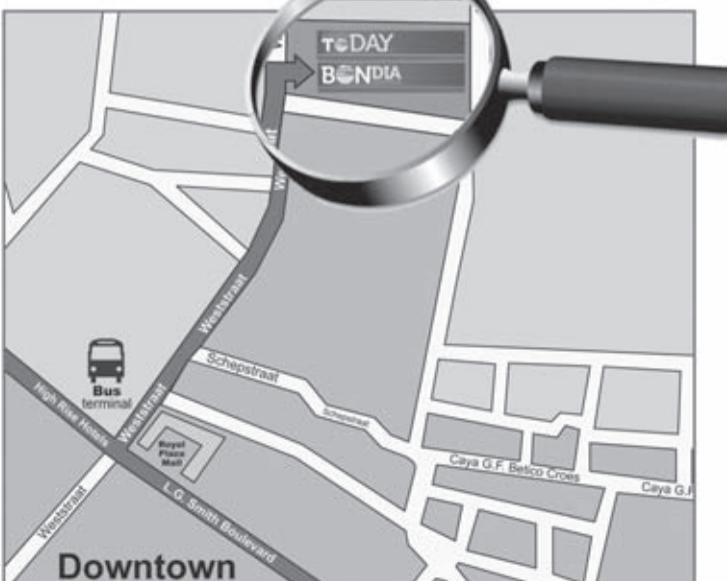
Skopje in 1995. His mother died of tuberculosis two years later, and the young chimp began suffering from depression and loneliness. Trajkovski tried parenting him but for years his condition did not improve. Eventually a Netherlands-based animal rescue group, Animal Advocacy and Protection, was contacted and Koko was transferred to their facilities in the Netherlands in 2009 to recover.

After 10 years at the AAP facility, Koko returned to Skopje along with three other chimpanzees who will be keeping him company: 57-year-old Mimmi, and Hiasl and Rosi, both 38. All three were treated by AAP after suffering years of mistreatment. □

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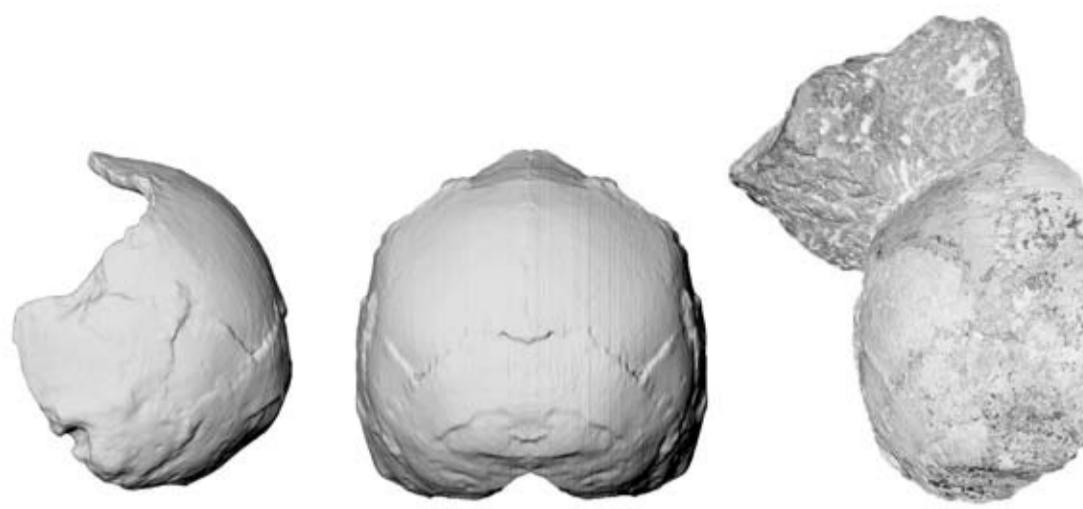
Greek find called earliest sign of our species out of Africa

By MALCOLM RITTER

AP Science Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Scientists say they've identified the earliest sign of our species outside Africa, a chunk of skull recovered from a cave in southern Greece. Its estimated age is at least 210,000 years old, making it 16,000 or more years older than an upper jaw bone from Israel that was reported last year. It shows our species began leaving Africa much earlier than previously thought, researchers reported Wednesday.

The travelers to Greece evidently left no descendants alive today. Other research has established that the exodus from Africa that led to our worldwide spread didn't happen until more than 100,000 years later. The new work is the latest sign of earlier, dead-end exits from the continent where *Homo sapiens* evolved. The fossil, from the rear of a skull, was actually found decades ago — excavated in the late 1970s



This image provided by the University of Tuebingen in Germany shows the Apidima 1 partial cranium fossil, right, with a piece of rock still attached, and its digital reconstruction from a posterior view, middle, and a side view, left.

from the Apidima Cave in the southern Peloponnese region of Greece and later kept in a University of Athens museum.

"Not a lot of attention was paid to it," said Katerina Harvati of the University of Tuebingen in Germany, who was invited to study the fossil.

Harvati and others report the results of their analysis in the journal *Nature*.

To establish the age, they analyzed bits of bone from the fossil. To identify what species it came from, the researchers compared a virtual reconstruction to the shapes of fossils from known species.

Harvati said finding evidence that our species had reached Greece by that time was initially a surprise, though in hindsight "it's not that difficult to imagine that

it would have happened." Eric Delson of Lehman College in New York, who did not participate in the study, said the discovery was somewhat surprising but that southeastern Europe "makes a lot of sense" for a finding that old. Now the question is what happened to these people, he said. Did Neanderthals out-compete them?

But some other scientists

Associated Press

are not convinced the fossil's reported age and identification are correct.

Warren Sharp, an expert on dating fossils at the Berkeley Geochronology Center in California, said the age of 210,000 years is "not well supported by the data."

Ian Tattersall of the American Museum of Natural History in New York called the case for identifying the fossil as *H. sapiens* "pretty shaky." Its shape is suggestive, but it's incomplete and it lacks features that would make the identification firmer, he said in an email.

In response, Harvati said the back of the skull is very useful for differentiating *H. sapiens* from Neanderthals and other related species, and that several lines of evidence support the identification.

At a press conference, Harvati said it's not clear whether scientists will be able to recover DNA or proteins from the fossil to confirm its identity. □



This computer graphics image released by the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) shows the Hayabusa2 spacecraft above the asteroid Ryugu.

By MARI YAMAGUCHI

Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — A Japanese spacecraft landed on a distant asteroid on Thursday and collected underground samples that scientists hope will provide clues

to the origin of the solar system billions of years ago, Japan's space agency said.

The Hayabusa2 spacecraft had created a landing crater on the rocky asteroid in April by dropping a

Japan says space probe landed on asteroid to get soil sample

copper impactor. It landed inside that crater on Thursday and collected samples that scientists believe contain valuable data unaffected by space radiation and other environmental factors.

Hayabusa2 is the first spacecraft to successfully collect underground samples from an asteroid. A similar mission is planned by the U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration on another asteroid, Bennu.

The Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency, or JAXA, said data show Hayabusa2 touched down and rose safely after collecting the samples. The moment the success was announced in the command center, everyone stood up, cheered and applauded.

"It was a success, a big success," said Takashi Kubota, a Hayabusa2 project member. "We achieved success in all scheduled

procedures." JAXA said the samples have been safely placed in a container, which will be moved to a capsule for secure storage.

"We obtained pieces of the history of the solar system. We took a historic step," said Yuichi Tsuda, the Hayabusa2 project manager. "Nobody has collected and brought home underground materials from anywhere further than the moon."

Asteroids are rocky remnants left over from the formation of the solar system. With one of its most critical missions now finished, the next task is to get Hayabusa2 to safely return to Earth with the samples, Tsuda said.

The asteroid, named Ryugu after an undersea dragon palace in a Japanese folktale, is about 300 million kilometers (180 million miles) from Earth. Hayabusa2 is expected to leave the asteroid later this year and

return home at the end of next year. The asteroid, about 900 meters (yards) in diameter, is extremely rocky on its surface and has signs organic compounds, scientists say.

Hayabusa2 made a similar landing at another location on the asteroid in February and collected topsoil samples.

The spacecraft started its gradual descent to the asteroid on Wednesday. In the final landing phase Thursday, it hovered at a height of 30 meters (100 feet) and quickly found its landing marker left from the earlier mission.

The landing was a challenge for Hayabusa2 because of the risk of getting hit by dust and debris remaining at the crater, Kubota said. JAXA plans to send the spacecraft close to the asteroid again as early as next week to examine the landing site from above. □

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Blanco Brown has the next country rap hit with 'The Git Up'

By KRISTIN M. HALL

Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP)—After "Old Town Road" kicked off a trend of country-trap this year, Blanco Brown felt the timing was just right for his dance hit "The Git Up." Brown, who grew up in Atlanta, has been living in both musical worlds his entire life. His mom played him OutKast and Jodeci, but he'd spend summers with his aunt in rural Butler, Georgia, where he'd hear mostly Johnny Cash and Tim McGraw.

"Later on when I was about 23, 24, I started recording country records," 34-year-old Brown said. "And my friends would tell me, 'Man, you're black. You know you can't do no country records.'" Brown kept working on his combination of hip-hop and country, which he likes to call "trailer trap," while also songwriting and working as a vocal producer for Grammy-winning acts like Fergie and Monica. His music caught the attention of BBR Music Group, a Nashville-based record label with artists like Jason Aldean and Zac Brown Band, which put out his self-titled



This July 5, 2019 photo shows Blanco Brown during a photo session in Nashville, Tenn. Brown, who is signed to a Nashville record label, has been mixing country and rap sounds for years.

Associated Press

EP in May. His songs combine trap music styles such as 808 drum machines, aggressive synths and tempo with melodic strings, lap steel and guitar and lyrics about Southern culture. He was experimenting with a different tuning on the lap steel when he came up with the twang that he looped throughout "The Git Up," which has shot to No.

1 on Billboard's Hot country songs chart in just five weeks. He named the song after a saying he heard from his childhood.

"I remember growing up in the hood and my grandmother saying, 'Ya'll better git up and do ya'll work,'" Brown said.

The song, which is No. 16 on the all-genre Hot 100 chart, became viral similar

to "Old Town Road" on the social media app TikTok, where people have recreated Brown's dance moves or added their own dances and tagged it to #TheGitUpChallenge. "It felt so fine and I was like, 'People got to dance to this,'" Brown said.

Brown said "Old Town Road," which is spending its 14th consecutive week

on top of the Hot 100 chart, opened a lot of people's ears to the music he's been passionate about.

"People heard that record and they were just looking for something close to it," Brown said. "The whole time I had been building my sound and I was like, 'It's in the same vein.' So that just gave me like a sense of 'OK, there is an appetite for this.'"

But unlike Lil Nas X, Brown's song has not been removed from Billboard's country charts. He said he wasn't concerned about anyone saying it wasn't country enough.

"People are gonna try to criticize it, but if you take away the 808s, then you got traditional country," Brown said. While "The Git Up" is popular online, Brown's label is just now making an official push to get the song played on country radio. Brown said that music fans are a lot more open to new sounds and mixing of genres than ever before. "You hear it at the club. You hear it at the after parties," Brown said. "Why not be the artist that does it wholeheartedly?" □

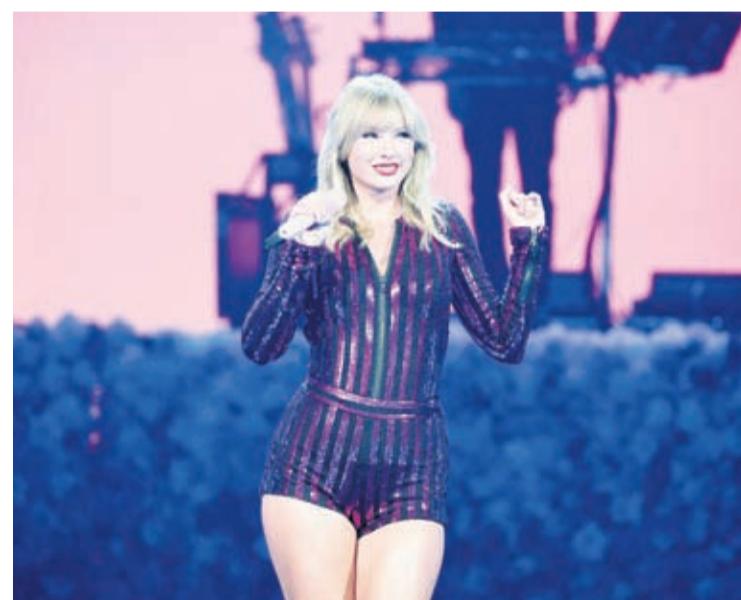
Taylor Swift shakes off drama with fun concert performance

By MESFIN FEKADU

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP)—In her first public appearance since discovering her masters were in the hands of someone she's not a fan of, Taylor Swift didn't directly address the issue, but she did play music from that rich catalog, including songs from her groundbreaking sophomore album to her first full-blown pop project to her latest title.

There was one moment, though, where Swift may have called out Scooter Braun and Scott Borchetta on Wednesday night when she headlined Amazon Music's Prime Day Concert in New York City. When singing her final song, the upbeat hit "Shake It Off," she was extra loud as she uttered the words: "Liars and the dirty, dirty cheats of the world."



Singer Taylor Swift performs at Amazon Music's Prime Day concert at the Hammerstein Ballroom on Wednesday, July 10, 2019, in New York.

Associated Press

Some viewers on social media felt like Swift was throwing shade, but the pop star seemed to shake off the drama with a fun, entertaining performance that came two weeks after she

wrote that she was sad and grossed out that her music catalog now belongs to Braun, who she accuses of subjecting her to years of incessant and manipulative bullying.

Swift's die-hard fans were as loud as ever Wednesday, erupting before she hit the stage at the Hammerstein Ballroom, chanting her name minutes before opened her set with a colorful performance of the song "ME!"

She sang tunes from all of her albums except her 2006 self-titled debut and 2010's "Speak Now." She strummed her guitar while she sang "Delicate" from "reputation" and "Welcome to New York" from "1989," which won the Grammy for album of the year. She reminded the audience she was a former country singer before performing "Love Story" from "Fearless," which also won the top Grammy prize. And she whipped her head back and forth as she belted "I Knew You Were Trouble" from her "Red" album.

Swift sang her "You Need to Calm Down" live for the first time at the event, which also featured performances by singers SZA, Dua Lipa and Becky G. On the song Swift addresses her own haters but also calls out those who attack the LGBTQ community. It will appear on her new album, "Lover," to be released Aug. 23.

"It's really, sort of, a love letter to love itself. And I think that love is such an inspiring thing to write about," she said of the upcoming album. "Love is complexity. Love is struggle. Love is pain. Love is joy. Love is hope. Love is equality."

Emmy-winning actress Jane Lynch hosted the event, which featured clips of Amazon Prime programming between performances, from "The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel" to "Jack Ryan." □

'Lion King' returns but it's harder to feel the love

By JAKE COYLE
Associated Press

Life moves in a circle, "The Lion King" tells us, and, increasingly, so does studio moviemaking. Close on the heels of "live-action" remakes of "Aladdin" and "Dumbo" and on the precipice of a reborn "The Little Mermaid," "The Lion King" is back, too. Round and round we go.

Cue Savannah sunrise. Cue "Naaaants ingonyama bagithi baba!"

The remakes have themselves been a mixed bag offering some combination of modern visual effects, fresh casting and narrative tweaks to catch up more dated material to the times. Don't count on a new "Song of the South," but much of the Disney li-



This image released by Disney shows characters, from left, Zazu, voiced by John Oliver, and young Simba, voiced by JD McCrary, in a scene from "The Lion King."

Associated Press

brary will soon have been outfitted with digital clothes for the Internet era.

It's easy to greet these remakes both cynically and a little eagerly. In the case of "The Lion King," the songs are still good, the Shakespearean story still solid. And, well, Beyoncé's in it. And yet Jon Favreau's "The Lion King," so abundant with realistic simulations of the natural world, is curiously lifeless. The most significant overhaul to an otherwise slavishly similar retread is the digital animation rendering of everything, turning the film's African grasslands and its animal inhabitants into a photo-realistic menagerie. The Dis-

ney worlds of cartoon and nature documentary have finally merged.

It's an impressive leap in visual effects, which included Favreau, cinematographer Caleb Deschanel and VFX chief Rob Legato making use of virtual-reality environments. Some of the computer-generated makeovers are beautiful. Mufasa, the lion king voiced again by James Earl Jones, is wondrously regal, and his mane might be the most majestic blonde locks since Robert Redford. And the grass stalks of the pride lands shimmer in the African sunlight.

But it's a hollow victory. By turning the elastic, dynam-

ic hand-drawn creations of Roger Allers and Rob Minkoff's 1994 original into realistic-looking animals, "The Lion King" has greatly narrowed its spectrum of available expressions. Largely lost are the kinds of characterization that can flow from voice actor to animation. (Think of how closely fused Tom Hanks is with Woody in the "Toy Story" movies.) Here, most of the starry voice actors (including Donald Glover as the grown-up lion prince Simba, Beyoncé as the older lioness Nala and Chiwetel Ejiofor as the villainous Scar) feel remote from their characters. And, in many cases, so do we. □

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SAT 1:50 | 4:10 | 6:20 | 8:30 | 10:40
SUN 1:50 | 4:10 | 6:20 | 8:30
PBP MON-THU & SUN 2:55 | 5:05 | 7:15 | 9:25
FRI-SAT 2:55 | 5:05 | 7:15 | 9:25 | 11:35
KAYA SCODELARIO | BARRY PEPPER

CRAWL
WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES
PH MON-THU 3:50 | 5:50 | 7:50
FRI 3:50 | 5:50 | 7:50 | 10:00
SAT 1:50 | 3:50 | 5:50 | 7:50 | 10:00
SUN 1:50 | 3:50 | 5:50 | 7:50
PBP MON-THU & SUN 1:35 | 3:35 | 5:35 | 7:15 | 9:35
FRI-SAT 1:35 | 3:35 | 5:35 | 7:15 | 9:35 | 11:35
PBP MON-THU & SUN 2:30 | 4:30 | 6:30 | 8:30 | 10:30
FRI-SAT 2:30 | 4:30 | 6:30 | 8:30 | 10:30
TOM HOLLAND | SAMUEL L. JACKSON

SPIDER-MAN: Far From Home
WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES
PH MON-FRI 5:50 | 8:40
SAT-SUN 3:00 | 5:50 | 8:40
MON-THU 5:00 | 7:50
FRI 5:00 | 7:50 | 10:40
SAT 2:10 | 5:00 | 7:50 | 10:40
SUN 2:10 | 5:00 | 7:50
CXC MON-THU & SUN 2:00 | 4:45 | 7:30
FRI-SAT 2:00 | 4:45 | 7:30 | 10:15
PBP MON-SUN 12:55 | 3:40 | 6:25 | 9:10
TOM HOLLAND | SAMUEL L. JACKSON

TOY STORY 4
WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES
PH MON-THU 4:00 | 6:25 | 8:50
FRI 4:00 | 6:25 | 8:50 | 11:15
SAT 1:40 | 4:00 | 6:25 | 8:50 | 11:15
SUN 1:40 | 4:00 | 6:25 | 8:50
PBP MON-SUN 12:55 | 5:25
TOM HANKS | TIM ALLEN

ANNABELLE COMES HOME
WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES
R
PH MON-THU & SUN 7:50
FRI-SAT 7:50 | 10:00
PBP MON-THU & SUN 2:05 | 4:30 | 6:55 | 9:20
FRI-SAT 2:05 | 4:30 | 6:55 | 9:20 | 11:45
VERA FARMIGA | PATRICK WILSON

MIB INTERNATIONAL
WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES
PG-13
PBP MON-SUN 7:00 | 9:30
CHRIS HEMSWORTH | TESSA THOMPSON

YESTERDAY
WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES
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PBP MON-FRI 5:15
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3 vehicles owned by Elvis Presley going up for auction

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Elvis Presley fans can take to the road in his personal stretch limousine, on his last motorcycle or in a pickup truck if they have the money, an auction house announced Wednesday. Kruse GWS Auctions said the items will be part of its Artifacts of Hollywood auction on Aug. 31. Presley drove the white-on-white 1973 Lincoln Continental stretch many times around Memphis, Tennessee, Kruse said. It features an old-school TV and other amenities. There are photos showing "the King" driving the car he was in when he stopped at a car accident in Memphis in 1976. The auction house said a



This photo provided by GWS Auctions shows a motorcycle that belonged to Elvis Presley.

Associated Press

1976 Harley Davidson FLH 1200 Electra Glide motorcycle was the last motorcycle Presley ever purchased. He transported it from California to Memphis and sold it 90 days before he died in 1977 at age 42. The Harley has been on display at the Pioneer Auto Museum in Murdo, South Dakota, since

the late 1980s. The third Presley vehicle is one of three GMC pickups that Presley purchased in 1967 for his Circle G Ranch in Mississippi. Two years later, his father, Vernon, sold them back to the same dealership, the auction house said. It has undergone a total restoration. □

Gay square dancers add new spin to centuries-old dance style

By NATALIE POMPILIO

Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — There wasn't a crinoline in sight as 850 square dancers at the International Association of Gay Square Dance Clubs opened its annual convention last week in a Philadelphia hotel, bringing their best promenades and do-si-dos to a slightly sped-up version of "Somewhere Over the Rainbow."

Correction: There was one crinoline flouncing across the floor, a multi-tiered blue skirt with silver accents and a maroon corset, worn by Ward Lambert of Phoenix. "Certain things never go out of style," said Lambert, 56, dark chest hair peeking over the fabric of his fitted bodice. "You just have to reinvent them."

You could say the same about square dancing, a centuries-old dance style often associated with the American West and middle school gymnasiums. While there are still square dance clubs nationwide, numbers are dwindling. IAGSDC is trying to counter that decline, and dispel misperceptions non-dancers might have.

"They think it's a bunch of 70- and 80-year-olds wearing dresses made in the 1950s dancing to music recorded in the 1940s," said Tim Harper, president of the Independence Squares, a Philadelphia club that serves the LGBTQ and straight communities.

While there are octogenarian dancers, all of that allemand'ing left and right "keeps you young," said Harper, noting that his club's oldest member is 85



This July 4, 2019 photo shows dancers move around the floor during the International Association of Gay Square Dance Clubs annual convention in Philadelphia.

and two newest members are 24 and 25.

The Independence Squares were founded 30 years ago in part as a social outlet for the LGBTQ community. This was decades before same sex marriage was legalized, just before "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" was pitched as a reasonable way for LGBTQ members of the military to serve without issue.

At the time, many heterosexual square dance clubs expected members to come in pairs, said Howard Richman, a member of the Times Squares, New York's LGBTQ-friendly square dance club.

LGBTQ clubs happily welcomed singletons and had no problem with men dancing as women and vice versa. These clubs also put comfort over tradition when it came to dress.

That's one aspect of the In-

dependence Squares that appealed to New Jersey shore resident Eileen DuBois, 70.

"We dress casually here, T-shirts and shorts," said DuBois, who met her late husband square dancing and also belongs to a straight square dancing club. "The other clubs like traditional square dance clothing with crinolines and petticoats and all that mess."

Another welcome aspect: interacting with people she might not have ordinarily met.

"I've really found my niche — not that it's my niche in terms of my choice of lifestyle, but my niche in terms of my choice of friends," said DuBois, who previously had few gay acquaintances and was completely unfamiliar with the transgender community. "Everybody is so accepting and

so loving. They don't just know my face. They know me and I know them."

Many consider the annual convention akin to a family reunion. Between events last weekend, Tina and Jason Blake of St. George, Utah, were looking to reconnect with friends they'd made at IAGSDC's 2014 convention in Salt Lake City.

"We just enjoy dancing with the gay community so much," said Tina Blake, 60, who with her husband also belongs to a more traditional square dance club. "They are very welcoming to straight couples."

She also finds the LGBTQ clubs dance at a faster pace.

"It's a very aerobic activity. They dance the way we did when we danced in our 20s," Blake said. "It's fast, it's exciting. It's fun."

Associated Press

Clubs from the U.S., Canada and Japan mingled around Blake as she spoke. Here, the Denver-based Rocky Mountain Rainbeaus. There, the Edo8s, from Japan. The Tech Squares of Cambridge strolled through with their sister club, the Boston Uncommons. Among the clubs from California: the Redwood Squares, the Golden State squares and the Tinseltown Squares.

Coming up were the specialty "tips," or dances, including one for fans of leather; another for hairy men; and the "moonshine," for those who want to get naked and dance (behind closed doors).

"We haven't attended those," Blake said.

Novices quickly find that square dancing is more complex than they'd believed when they were preteens awkwardly touching another student's arm in gym. There are multiple achievement levels from "mainstream," which has 68 different "calls" or moves, to "challenge," which some compared to complex math.

Dancers don't know their steps in advance. A caller announces the moves over the music — which can be anything from Hank Williams to Rihanna — while the dancers are in motion. There were hugs all around when the Blakes found their friends from Salt Lake City's LGBTQ-friendly club, the Temple Squares, mother and daughter dancers Mindi Griffin, 55, and Lizz Ashby, 35, and married dancers Ross and Justin Crawshaw-Loxton. □

Poet and former Youth Laureate Amanda Gorman has book deal

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Former Youth Poet Laureate Amanda Gorman is working on a picture book. Viking Children's Books announced Thursday that Gorman's "Change Sings: A Children's Anthem" is scheduled for 2021. It's the first part of a two-book deal.

The rising senior at Harvard University says in a statement that she wanted to share a "vision of positive change with young readers."

She was named the country's first Youth Poet Laureate in 2017.

The position is sponsored in part by the President's Committee on the Arts and

the Humanities.

She has published a poetry collection, "The One for Whom Food Is Not Enough," and read at the White House during the Obama administration.

She recently performed an Independence Day poem for "CBS This Morning" with the Boston Pops Orchestra. □



This Aug. 26, 2018 file photo shows former Youth Poet Laureate Amanda Gorman at the Black Girls Rock! Awards in Newark, N.J.

Associated Press

Today's assignment for classroom design: flexibility

By KIM COOK
Associated Press

Desks lined up in precise rows with teacher firmly planted at the front: That was the standard classroom format for much of the last century.

But with many educators saying kids can do better in a more relaxed and flexible learning environment, designers and architects have been providing spaces and furnishings to fit that bill.

"Innovators no longer speak of 'classrooms,'" says Bob Pearlman, a Tucson, Arizona-based education consultant. "Students now work in learning studios, plazas and home bases. They shift into varied extended learning areas and collaboration zones that include project-planning rooms, workrooms, focused labs, group learning spaces, individual pods."

He mentions Albemarle County's public school system, in Charlottesville, Virginia. The district invited teams from all its schools to conceptualize learning spaces that would inspire kids to tackle complex ideas and work on creative building projects. Now, the elementary grades have swapped out traditional desks for stools, soft seating, mobile chairs and connectable tables.

Another new reality changing the dynamic: connectivity.

"Classrooms, libraries, and labs used to be the only spaces where students spent their school hours. Wireless, laptops and project learning have



This photo provided by Feaster Charter School in Chula Vista, Calif., shows students using bean bags in a classroom.

changed that," Pearlman says. "This has transformed all school spaces into potential extended learning areas, even the corridors and alcoves."

LAYOUT

Back in the 1970s, American psychologist Robert Sommer was urging a critical look at traditional classroom layouts, saying classrooms aren't just simple cubes, says Jo Earp, editor of Teacher magazine, a publication of the nonprofit Australian Council for Educational Research. Sommer noted that in any given room, the lighting or heating will be better in some spots than in others, as will the view of the blackboard.

Besides the alternative "freeform" classroom, Earp says, some teachers can find good results with a hybrid model, perhaps lining up desks at the start of the year and then rearranging

them in groups as the classroom dynamic becomes clearer and projects are undertaken.

Natural light and views, reduced background noise and good air quality are all considerations in classroom design, says Aaron Jobson of Quattrocchi Kwok Architects in Santa Rosa, California. "More and more evidence connects the physical environment to learning outcomes," he says. New designs include internal glass walls and doors that increase connectedness among students and provide good sightlines for teachers.

The concept of dynamic, explorative learning spaces was championed by futurist David Thornburg in his book "From the Campfire to the Holodeck" (Jossey-Bass, 2013). He said schools should provide spaces based on how humans learn, with a balance of campfire (lecture space), watering hole (conversation space), cave (reflection space) and life (experiential space).

That could mean one room is used in different ways at different times, or in different ways at the same time. Loren Myers, a first-grade teacher at a public charter school in San Jose, California, says retrofitting traditional schools can be expensive, and teachers don't have big budgets. She says many get creative with resources to create a unique classroom.

Associated Press

"I personally incorporate some innovative spaces into my traditional layout; there's a peace corner where students can go to calm down, a VIP table for students who show exemplary work ethics, and flex seating for students who need alternative options to stay focused."

Stephanie Dominguez, a principal at Feaster Charter School in Chula Vista, California, says her aim is to prepare kids for the work world. "There isn't one industry in which professional adults work in isolation; most professionals work in collaborative settings," she says. Teachers at her school have flexibility to design their own spaces, she says, but across the 70 classrooms there's one thing in common: "Students must have spaces or desk structures that make collaborating with their peers easy."

FURNISHINGS

Over the decades, famous designers have lent their talents to school furniture — among them, Jean Prouve's mid-1930s tubular steel and wood single desk, double bench and chair; Alvar Aalto's inclinable tabletop desk of the 1950s; and Arne Jacobsen's bent plywood desk and chair of the same era.

Today, classroom furniture runs the gamut from chairs to chaises, with work tables of varying heights.

Imagine Charter Schools, based in Arlington, Virginia, and operating schools in nine states, offers colorful swivel seating, as well as comfy upholstered benches. Montessori schools have soft lighting similar to home environments, and more subdued furniture and decor than traditional classrooms.

Marianne Box, a design specialist at school-furniture maker Hertz Furniture, in Ramsey, New Jersey, says ergonomic seating and mobile, flexible pieces are big sellers. The focus is on managing kids' energy levels, and giving them places to concentrate. Classroom bean bags give younger students a place to read. "They mold to fit each student, giving them support and a sense of comfort," she says.

Self-contained study booths have tablet surfaces, power supplies, footrests and armrests.

A molded plastic wobble stool comes in various sizes and colors; Box says it also promotes torso and leg movement. □



This photo shows Humanscale's Ballo stool, airfilled domes on each end of a sturdy central column, the Ballo is an example of the kind of dynamic seating office and learning spaces are offering.

Associated Press



This photo provided by Hertz Furniture shows upholstered, moveable ottomans that can be configured into sofa-style seating, high/low adjustable stools, and worktables provide students at Entrepreneur High School in San Bernardino, Calif.

Associated Press